

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

April 15, 2022



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Good Friday	April 15	7:30 pm
Easter Sunday	April 17	9:00 & 11:00 am

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

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



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.stjohnsudbury.org

**APRIL 28TH, 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 19TH AND 26TH**

Please join us!!!

ZOOM book club meetings will be on Tuesdays, April 19th and 26th, at 11:00 AM.

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

April 26th will be a get together to discuss prior books read and new books to read.

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

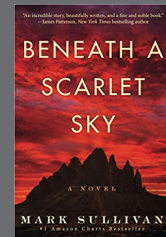
Next books:

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
Pastor Ivan Bepalov (in Kyiv)

Christopher Miller
John Duane
Rhonda Tibbetts
Bill Davis
Jan Nielsen
Judy
Meg Davis
Ed Holmgren
The Rev. Tim Stein

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



SHOE REMOVAL AND NEW LIFE: A STORY

God said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

Exodus 3:5

Waiting on the curb, I looked back at what happened. It was a mess.

I’m a mess.

There was a fight, an argument that ended with me running from everything. I feel lost, and like I lost the only family I’d ever known, a family who plucked me off the sidewalk as an infant. I lied to the people so much like my birth parents must be. I’d shoved my uncle because I lost my temper when I saw him treat the people I was born to just because they’re immigrants.

The fight was partly because I felt guilty for having it so good, knowing where I come from and what life might have been had I not been taken in. I thought I’d made some peace with it, but even as I buried my fears and feelings, it became more raw, more bitter.

Granddad converted the whole top floor of his apartment building into a family complex. Nothing but the newest and best for us. I saw “my people”, as my uncle calls them, living in run down apartments while I was living with the landlord’s family, my family, on the top floor. Even so, I remember the first time I went to play with Jacob from school down on Three. His apartment’s water barely ran and I saw the cracks in his wall.

Jacob’s family moved shortly after that when his mom lost her job and they couldn’t afford to stay. That’s how life in the building always was. Make a friend, but soon the new friend moves because their family had a crisis. It made me embarrassed to see their apartment and see that his mom recognized me. Over the years the embarrassment faded because I never invited friends upstairs, but I knew how I lived and how they lived.

I saw “my people”, as my uncle calls them, living in those run down apartments while I was living with “my” family. No matter that they were my family, they never let me forget that I didn’t start out on the top floor.

Most families in our building were refugees, immigrants, or people who belonged to other minority groups. By the time I was seventeen I’d been in private school for years and hardly noticed them. They were all in and out so fast, but it didn’t make sense to me because I’d lived in the same place my whole life. Why? Grandpa said they were lazy. My uncle just yelled at them a lot.

One day, I met a girl my age on the way into the building. I couldn’t help but smile at her. She smiled back, asking if I lived there. As always, I said yes — but not on which floor. I started visiting her often and ate dinner with her family at least once a week. Still, I never told her where I lived, which means she didn’t know who I was.

One day I walked up to the steps and saw old cars loading boxes in every nook and cranny. I’d seen some of these folks before, helping others move in and out, and it was nothing new. It happened here so often I barely noticed, but there she was, sobbing. She said her dad lost his job and they were already behind on rent. My uncle apparently told them two nights ago they had to be out by that day. Her dad walked out and grumbled as he carried something heavy, “They didn’t even serve an eviction notice, just told me to get out or they’d call the cops”. He explained that he had a bench warrant for a failure to appear because he’d gotten a ticket and didn’t have the money to pay it.

“It’s how they get you for being poor”, he said. “You don’t have money, so when something goes wrong they give you fines you can’t pay. When they give you fines that you can’t pay, they fine you again for being broke and threaten to arrest you”. They’d just loaded the last of it into a car, the third trip that day, I’d learned. They

were officially moved out, and I was feeling awful because they were moving thirty minutes away. It might as well be hours, since I didn't have a ride and public transportation was the pits.

Then my uncle came out. He was meaner than I'd seen him, and he was always a little mean to the people who lived in our building, anyway. Apparently her dad made him angry on that last trip out by refusing to pay an extra fee they decided they deserved. My uncle was walking up behind her dad and had his hand up like he was going to hit him. From five feet away, I jumped him and pushed him to the ground. I hit him hard and heard his head crack against the pavement, but he was breathing and complaining. They were already in the car and yelled "come on!", so I hopped in and we drove off.

They didn't know he was my uncle. For maybe the first time, I was just some kid from the building who'd become one of them. I didn't have any place to go now, which I guess was a lie, but I sure didn't want to see my uncle after that for a little bit. They offered to let me sleep on their couch for a bit, which turned into about a little over a week. One day her father asked me what was wrong and why I didn't have anyplace to go, and the truth fell out of my mouth about everything

Later I told the rest of the family. I expected them to be angry that I lied, but they showed me the strangest kindness. Her mom told me that she'd had a complicated family too, that she hadn't seen them in a long time. It was weird seeing a grownup look so uncertain. She said she hadn't thought about them in awhile, and that there were times she really missed them, but it had been so long, and that was back home. "It's not like I can pick up and visit when we can hardly keep a roof over our heads here." She told me I needed to figure out how to make peace, at least with my parents, if I could, and handed me cab fare. I told her I didn't want it because they didn't have enough to begin with, but she told me "That's what we do. We share. No one has much, but you have to make space for what's important."

I stood alone at the curb waiting on the cab.

The sunset was coming along the horizon, and even this late the heat of the day made the air above the pavement ripple like it was on fire. "What am I going to do?", I said to no one in particular.

Her father's voice resounded in a way that felt like it was in me and around me and everywhere at once sounded in my heart, "You're going to stop running and talk to your family."

Glued to the spot, I barely breathed and couldn't turn around; couldn't think. "What do I say? Where do I start? How can I go back when I'm alone and messed everything up so badly?"

"You have an inner strength that you don't know. You're not alone, I'll be with you when you need me. You know where I am."

I turned and heard only the wind, and his voice spoke, "You may not know me, but I know you. I know what's in you. I lit the fire inside you and stoke it with my Breath."

"But who are you? What do I say?"

"Go, and I'll give you words."

"What does that even mean?"

"Go, stop looking for answers and fix this relationship. You have the rest of your life to figure out the rest, but this, this is simple but hard. You can do this."

The cabby's yell pulled me out of my head, or heart, or wherever I was. I got in the car and had the strangest feeling of calm determination, and a sense that the name of the voice was I Am What I Am — not even a name as much as Identity and Existence itself.

I had the feeling that I am what I am, too. I guess I have the rest of my life to figure that out, too.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric

PASTOR'S CLASS: LIVING FAITH

Next week is our last session in our conversational exploration of faith practices (postponed from tomorrow) Join us Monday, April 25 at 8:00 pm so we can explore these questions together.

MUSLIMS CELEBRATE RAMADAN DURING APRIL BY MILDRED CHEUNG

This month the featured children's book is Ramadan Moon by Na'ima B Robert and illustrated by Shirin Adl.

For Muslims, Ramadan is one of the holiest months of the year.

The celebration begins with a new crescent moon and continues for a complete lunar cycle. This year Ramadan is being celebrated from April 2 to May 2. During Ramadan there is a renewed focus on spirituality, self-reflection and a renewed commitment to generosity and charity. Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset during Ramadan. They believe that fasting develops submission to God, empathy with the poor and gives time for spiritual introspection.

Children, the sick, the elderly, pregnant and nursing mothers are exempt from fasting. A meal (called suhoor) can be taken prior to sunrise, and at sunset, the fast is broken with a meal called Iftar. To mark the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the festival of Eid al-Fitr to express gratitude for the previous month of reflection and charitable acts.



Thank you to everyone who donated to the Mother's Day Bag project for the Wish Project in North Chelmsford. The Wish Project works with social service agencies across the Merrimack Valley—and beyond—to provide necessities to folks in need. With so many donations, we were able to decorate and fill 15 individual bags with toiletries, journals, books, and jewelry without spending any budget money. And our Sunday School students had a great time decorating and stuffing the bags!



CONFIRMATION CONNECTION

On April 3rd, we invited our future Confirmation students to join our current Confirmation students for a Taste of Confirmation class. We discussed Baptism and Confession and Forgiveness and used various stations like watercolor and burning sins to reflect on these ideas. We rounded out our time together assembling Easter baskets for Florence House, an Ascendria-run home for teenaged mothers and their children.

Our St John students gathered with youth from other Sudbury churches on April 10th for an egg hunt and journey through Holy Week. We made palm crosses, re-enacted Jesus overturning tables in the temple, and participated in a tenebrae service.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Families gathered for Sunday School on April 3rd to discuss Mary and Martha and Mary's gift of love for Jesus. We smelled different scents, determined if they smelled good or not, and tried to identify what they were. Then we went to work decorating and filling Mother's Day bags for The Wish Project in North Chelmsford.

On Palm Sunday we shared the stories of Holy Week and our ideas about what happened to Jesus. We enjoyed painting watercolor crosses using paint-resistant tape. You can enjoy our artwork on the Youth and Family bulletin board.



Easter Egg Hunt

April 17, 2022

St John's Backyard



Bring your baskets and join the fun!

Easter Sunday
Between the 9 AM and 11 AM services- Likely
around 10:30 AM

HAPPY EASTER FROM THE ST. JOHN PUPPETS!



Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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.

MISSION MOVES OPPORTUNITY!

The Mission Moves program is supporting folks in transition with a moving team of volunteers and furniture from Household Goods as they get settled into a new home. The St. John team has supported five moves since the launch of the program! In an effort to extend further care and support to the clients, we have started to send a follow up card of well wishes on their new home, including a grocery store gift card to each client. We are seeking donations to support this initiative and would be very grateful for any contributions!

Donations can be made to St. John with the subject line 'Mission Moves Gift Cards' and sent by mail or left in the Social Justice mailbox in the work room. Please contact the Social Justice Ministry at socialjustice@stjohnsudbury.org with any questions! Thank you!

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 15th 7:30 pm - Good Friday Worship (In-person)
April 17th 9:00 am - Worship (In-person)
10:30 am - Easter Egg Hunt (In-person)
11:00 am - Worship (In-person)
April 18th 10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 19th 11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
April 20th 10:00 am - Seniorcise
7:30 pm - Council Meeting
April 21st 10:00 am - Bible Study
6:00 pm - Bells
7:00 pm - Choir
April 22nd 7:30 pm - Knitting/Sewing Group
April 24th 9:30 am - Worship (In-person)
10:50 am - Sunday School (In-person)
6:30 pm - Confirmation
April 25th 10:00 am - Seniorcise
4:00 pm - Senior Ministry Meeting
8:00 pm - Pastor's Class: Living Faith
April 26th 11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
April 27th 10:00 am - Seniorcise
April 28th 10:00 am - Bible Study
4:00 pm - Discussion on Racism and Anti-Racism
6:00 pm - Bells
7:00 pm - Choir
April 29th 7:30 pm - Knitting/Sewing Group
May 1st 9:30 am - Worship (In-person)
10:50 am - Sunday School (In-person)
6:30 pm - Confirmation

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

