

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)
Administrative Assistant: Valerie Ripley (office@stjohnsudbury.org)
Director of Choirs: Benjamin Perry (choirdir@stjohnsudbury.org)
Organist: Bart Dahlstrom (organist@stjohnsudbury.org)

July 22, 2021

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

- July 23th -7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting/Sewing Group
July 25th -9:30 am - Worship **at St. John**
July 26th -No Seniorcise
July 27th - 11:00 am -Seniors on the Go Book Group
July 28th -No Seniorcise
-7:00 pm - Social Justice Ministry
-8:00 pm - Newish Parents Group
July 30th - 7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
August 1st -9:30 am - Worship **at St. John**
August 2nd -No Seniorcise
August 3rd -11:00 am - Seniors of the Go BookGroup
-7:00 pm - Social Justice Ministry Team
August 4th -No Seniorcise
August 6th -7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting/Sewing Group
August 8th -9:30 am - Worship **at St. John**



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



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
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Sudbury, Ma 01776
978-443-8350
www.stjohnsudburyma.org

ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB FOR JULY 27th AND AUGUST 3rd

Please join us!!!

On Tuesday, July 27th and
Tuesday, August 3rd at 11:00 AM,
we will have our ZOOM book club
meetings for just a get together to
discuss prior books read and new
books to read.

On August 17th, we will discuss
“Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind” by
Ann B. Ross.

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

Next books:

September 21, 2021,

“The Forgotten Garden”
by Kate Morton

October 19, 2021,

“The Last Train to Key West”
by Chanel Cleeton

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Rachel Florey

Johnny

David Donnelly

Trish Sarvela Leiva

Paul Simeone

Patricia Jolou

Ruth Avery

Janice Potter

June Carins

Erica Kivimaki

Liz Radoski

Brian

Wendy

Christopher Miller

Alexis Marsh

Liz Tolbert

John Duane

Jim Hansgate

Ron Rakowsky

Peter Kindem

Bill Davis

Rev. Angelika Zollfrank

Regina Mueller

Richard

Brian Young

Brennan McGinnis

Pat Quinn

Rhonda Tibbetts

Charlotte McNeil

Norma Duane

Steven Greene

Helen Williams

Walter Sarvela

NEW PRAYER LIST PROCEDURE

We are changing the way that we do the prayer list starting next week. Names will automatically remain on the prayer list for 3 months. You may request removal of a name at any time if circumstances change. Please review all the people on the prayer list and update Valerie as to how they are doing. This will help ensure that the list remains current.



KIDSPACE REDESIGN IS IN THE WORKS

Council has been discussing the future of Kidspace both as a physical space and as an opportunity for engagement in worship.

Our first phase is focusing on the safety issues for all worship participants. Now that the roof project is complete, the Kidspace platform will be removed and the pew anchors ground down so that we can prepare the floor for a new installed rug. Additionally, we will be installing a hand-hold on the center aisle to provide support for folks as they approach the altar. Our goal is to complete this phase before our Triumphant Return to the Sanctuary on September 26th.

Furthermore, we are rethinking the materials used in Kidspace in order to provide additional hands-on, age-appropriate ways for children to engage in worship. We are also developing “crossover” opportunities with Sunday school instruction to provide a better understanding of why we do and say what we do and say during worship.

NEW OFFICE HOURS BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2021

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

CHILDREN'S LENDING LIBRARY

Black is a Rainbow Color was the newest book added to our lending library. Our Director of Youth and Family Ministry, Michelle Rose, read the book during the Children's Message at the July 11 service. We are establishing a wish list of books that will expand the diversity of our library. If anyone is interested in donating a book from the list or wishing more information about the books please contact either Michelle Rose (mrose@stjohnsudbury.org) or Mildred Cheung (mildred.cheung@gmail.com). We will be updating this list periodically.

Drawn Together by Minh Le, illustrated by Dan Santat 2018

Fry Bread, a Native American Family Story by Kevin Noble Maillard, illustrated by Juana Martinzz-Neal 2019

Hair Twins by Raakhee Mirchandani, illustrated by Holly Hatyam 2021

We are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade 2020



AMIRAH PRAYER GATHERING | JULY 27TH AT 7:00 PM

Amirah is an organization that St. John has previously supported that exists to provide aftercare, resources, and opportunities to women who have survived different forms of sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, and prostitution. They do this by offering residential recovery opportunities, organizing outreach efforts, and educating communities, providers, and policy makers on the unique challenges victims and survivors face in the Northeastern United States.

They offer bi-monthly prayer gatherings in which friends of Amirah "labor in prayer" (Col. 4:12) for our exploited neighbors and the women of Amirah. This is the final Tuesday, every other month at 7:00 pm. If you would like to register for this prayer gathering you may do so at <https://bit.ly/3hZ5XMK>

ANTI RACISM IN EDUCATION BILL

For those of you wishing to learn more about MA bills S365 and H584: "An Act relative to Anti-racism, Equity, and Justice in Education there will be a Senator Eldridge Forum on the bill. Please register for this forum to learn about the bill and hear from students, educators, legislators, and community leaders. Listen and interact with expert panelists from different ethnic backgrounds. **See attached flyer on the next page to register.**

Anti-Racism, Equity, and Justice in K-12 Education Bills Forum Hosted by Senator Eldridge

CARE

Coalition for
Anti-Racism, Equity,
and Justice in Education



Jamie Eldridge
State Senator
Middlesex & Worcester District



Jason Lewis
State Senator
5th Middlesex District



Nika Elugardo
State Representative
15th Suffolk District

**Recognizing the history,
culture, and contribution of
our ethnic groups is key in
addressing racial equity**

MA bills **S365** and **H584** would create a Commission to develop this K-12 curriculum. Please join us to hear from students, educators, legislators, and community leaders.



Zane T. Crute
NAACP- Mystic Valley Area, Branch
President, JP Morgan- Assistant Vice
President,



Paul Watanabe
UMass Boston
Director of the Institute for
Asian American Studies

Event Time

Thursday
July 29th
6:30-8:00 PM
EST

Registration QR Code



Webinar Information

[Click Zoom Link
to Register in Advance](#)



Marisol Negron
UMass Boston
Director of Institute for
Latino Studies



J. Cedric Woods
UMass Boston
Director of Institute for
New England Native American Studies

Coalition of Antii-Racism, Equity and Justice in Education (CARE)
New England Chinese American Alliance (NECAA)
Indivisible Acton Area (IAA)

WHO ARE WE REALLY?

One of the running themes for Jesus is a debate about who he is and what that means. Is he the son of Mary and Joseph? Is he the Son of Humanity / Creation (more traditionally Son of Man, but this gets to the meaning of it a little more clearly)? Is he the Son of God? Is he a prophet reincarnated? Is he Messiah? Is he all of them or none of them?

I get the sense that these questions aren't simply questions we ask or the disciples ask, or that the temple authorities asked. It seems like Jesus asks who people say that he is in order to get a sense for himself of what he is called to be. We believe clearly that Jesus is fully God and fully human. We believe clearly that Jesus is the one whose virgin birth allowed him to be born outside of our enslavement to Sin. We say that Jesus is perfect as God is perfect.

But what does "perfect" really mean?

By one definition, "perfect" is simply as good as it gets. In the vernacular of our time it has the sense of "without any flaw". So is the perfection of Jesus equivalent to the old trope about Jesus being able to pitch every game perfectly if he played baseball? Or perhaps "perfect" means Jesus would pass all the chemistry tests that I never could. Does the perfection of God mean that God never makes a mistake?

While the answer to the last is "yes, God doesn't make mistakes" according to most theologians and people, I do wonder what that means in practice. Especially given the fact that we have several accounts of God experiencing a change of mind or heart — which is a phrase we often describe in conjunction with the word repent. It sounds so strange to say, "God repented", but it's precisely the phrasing we see when God observes the wickedness of humanity before the flood. This is also the word used when God desires to wipe the Hebrew people off of the earth for worshiping Baal while Moses was communing with God on Mt. Sinai.

God sees that the people melted down their jewelry and grows angry, saying to Moses something along the lines of, "YOUR people are doing this!". Moses reminded God that these people aren't his own people, but these are God's people with whom God established covenants through Abraham and Isaac, and the forebears of their people and faith. It's at this point that God relented, in the KJV it reads that God repented, and in all places it's pretty clear that what God is intending in one moment is changed in the next.

Does perfection mean that one's first inclination is always correct?

God regretted the flood and promised never again to destroy humanity in such a way.

If perfection is being free from any mistake or at least never regretting any action, then it doesn't seem as if God doesn't fit this.

There's another way we can understand perfect though, and that's completely whole.

If we think in this way, we see that the perfection of God is actually something to which we already aspire — the relationship that makes us whole, a relationship with One who hears and sees us in a unique way. God is Wholeness, and I don't know about anyone else, but wholeness is something I've sought throughout my whole life.

God doesn't need Israel or creation. God loves Israel and creation. Throughout scripture, the most powerful forces at work are some combination of God's creative energy, God's love, and God's Divine Presence — a Presence which is both creative and destructive because God is the beginning and the end. Love is a verb, and verbs are always in motion.

Love also makes us vulnerable.

continued

I believe to my core that this vulnerability is an immutable characteristic of love. We live out our love with others by sharing our deepest experiences, our most intimate physical and emotional moments, our darkest shames and our most aspirational hopes. Love doesn't demand, but it does desire. God is Love according to the letters of John, and therefore all that God does is done in love. God loves creation and has a desire for its return — and this isn't neediness or brokenness or evidence of a lack of wholeness, it's simply the nature of love to desire love in return.

And though God doesn't need us, because there's an immutable vulnerability in love, it hurts when the beloved spurns this love.

I don't have a good resolution for this, but this personification of the Divine and examining the Divine Character through this lens of love, we learn something interesting about who God demonstrates Godself to be through the incarnation of Jesus: love drives God to join us in this place and share our experiences with us because it's the ultimate expression of love. And to make the ultimate expression, God makes the necessary choice of ultimate vulnerability.

Who are we?

We are people whose wholeness is found in loving community, a space that loves us for who we are and creates a vulnerable space for us and claims a vulnerable space within us. Why does it hurt when we feel unheard in church? Why does it bother us differently when things go wrong with people at church? It's because there's something about the relationships of faith that access our heart more deeply than a lot of other relationships do.

We are a people called to be gentle with one another so that we can dwell in God's love.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Eric

Here is a couple of photos of the roof project as of the close of business on July 21, 2021. No plywood replacement was required. The work was completed on July 22, 2021.

Thank you to those who contributed to the Capital Campaign which funded this project. We also want to recognize Mike Misslin and the Facilities committee who worked so hard to make sure this job went flawlessly. It looks fabulous!

