

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

September 2, 2021

## UPCOMING AT ST. JOHN

September 3rd	-7:30 pm - Knitting/Crafting Group
September 5th	-9:30 pm - Worship <b>at St. John</b>
September 6th	-Office Closed - Labor Day
September 7th	-11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
September 8th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise -6:00 pm - Outreach -8:00 om - New(ish) parents Group
September 9th	-11:00 am - Discussion Group on Racism -1:00 pm - Confirmation Ministry Team
September 10th	-10:00 sm - Senior Ministry Meeting -7:30 pm - Knitting Group/Crafting Group
September 11th	-9:00 am - Council and Staff Retreat <b>at St. John</b>
September 12th	-9:30 pm - Worship <b>at St. John</b>
September 13th	-10:00 am - Seniorcise
September 14th	-11:00 am - Seniors on the Go Book Group
September 17th	-7:30 pm - Knitting Group/Crafting Group
September 19th	-9:30 am - Worship <b>at St. John</b> -10:45 am - Sunday School Teacher Training -6:30 pm - Confirmation Kick-Off



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.

## NEW OFFICE HOURS

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

St. John Lutheran Church  
16 Great Rd.  
Sudbury, Ma 01776  
978-443-8350  
[www.stjohnsudburyma.org](http://www.stjohnsudburyma.org)



## ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB FOR SEPTEMBER 7th AND SEPTEMBER 14th

Please join us!!!

ZOOM book club meetings will be on Tuesday, September 7th and Tuesday, September 14th at 11:00 AM for a get together to discuss prior books read and new books to read. September 21st, we will discuss "The Forgotten Garden" by Kate Morton.

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

Next books:

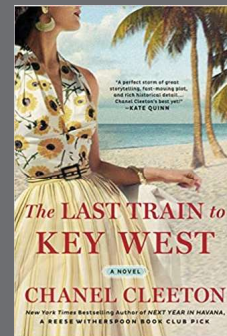
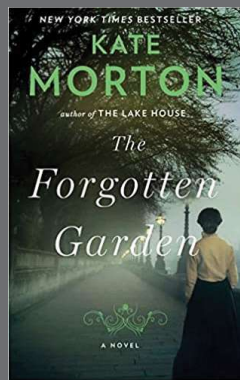
September 21, 2021, "The Forgotten Garden" by Kate Morton  
October 19, 2021, "The Last Train to Key West" by Chanel Cleeton  
November 16, 2021, "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich

### SEPTEMBER 9TH AT 11AM - ZOOM MEETING TO DISCUSS RACE, RACISM, AND ANTIRACISM.

Our group meets the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 11:00 AM 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.



## PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Debbie Reed  
Christopher Miller  
John Duane  
Jim Hansgate  
Alexis Marsh  
Bill Davis  
Marilyn Hartke

Walter Sarvela  
Charles Miller  
Helen Williams  
Liz Tolbert  
Ruth Avery  
Janice Potter  
Jan Nielsen

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



**New Prayer List Procedure** - We will be changing the way that we do the prayer list. Names will automatically remain on the prayer list for 3 months and then will need to be renewed. You may request removal or addition of a name at any time. 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. Thank you for your help.

## AN UNKNOWN FREEDOM

They were in a garden where they'd been created; told they were created to tend to the garden and enjoy all it offered. They could eat whatever they wanted except for the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

They were listening to their father go on about building an ark — an ark? An ark, because the world was going to flood. An ark, because their lives would be preserved as the world perished. An ark, that after long days and nights with animals and family, and rain rain rain rain rain, the dove returned with a branch. They walked out onto dry land to a world cleansed, nothing but possibilities ahead.

They cried out for freedom from slavery in Egypt, and the Lord was their salvation. Through a sea that parted for the children of Abraham but crashed down upon the army of a hardened-hearted pharaoh, they were delivered into an unknown freedom.

Freedom is one of the core themes of the Bible, and at its center is God, who desires for creation to have a sense of freedom; and we — from our very start — have no clue how to use it well or wisely.

We eat the fruit.

We do evil things shortly after we leave the ark even though we built the altar first.

We cry out for freedom and then long for our bondage when freedom becomes too expansive, too big, too scary — too real.

For months we wore masks and longed for freedom. We got a taste and are going back into more strict precautions. We still long for freedom in a world where we have nothing *but* choices.

Isn't that such a strange thing?

There are some real limits on how we can do things in order to protect ourselves and others, but there is literally no substantive limit on the number of choices we have outside of that. But despite the nearly endless array of options inside of these few limitations, I *feel* that the walls are kind of closing in because I'm weary of another shutdown, wary of the judgment of a population sick of being told what to do — and give-a-darn wizened by prolonged hypervigilance.

This is the real dilemma I find myself facing right now: I love this congregation and we will act responsibly out of love for each other, our community, and in service to the calling of God; and I love this congregation and we need to live life like a congregation out of love for each other, our community, and in service to the calling of God.

In Christ there is freedom because the law of Christ is the law of love, and if we follow the law of love then we can do what we want because love fulfills the law. And that's really the trick, isn't it?

What **I** want is different than what my love for others tells me to want. I want to do what I want, and yet my love for others tells me to want what's best for others. So despite what I want, I want to see what's good for all of us.

All that to say this:

We are the body of Christ, called to love the world around us. We have a lot to do, yet the last year-and-a-half has been a whole host of moving targets, expectations, and possibilities. We have a Gospel calling to do the hard work of being the Church in this strange and challenging time.

Over the next couple months, that's what we're going to learn to do: be the Church in its fullest expression given the circumstances we're experiencing now. I believe there are several questions we're being called to ask in this moment:

- Who is God calling us to be in this moment?
- When I think about the ministries I'm involved with, what does "normal" look like right now? What is outreach? What is member care? What is worship?
- What will help us be both on the right side of caution *and* live in a more normal way as the Church?

Friends, I tell you this with love: this is not a moment to sit still. When the world is in turmoil, the Church is a bulwark because the Lord is our bulwark; the Church is our strength because the Lord is our strength.

All we have to do is be who we are, follow God's calling and our vocation, and live the law of love.

None of us can do this alone, but none of us need to. We are the Church. With the love of God as the wind at our backs, we've got this.

Grace & Peace, Pastor Eric

## SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2021, 2:00 PM

*Join us as we celebrate our  
Triumphal Return  
to our sanctuary and our ministries .  
There will be a rededication of the  
sanctuary and the installation of  
The Rev. Eric G. Wolf.*





## **WE HAVE 4 YESES! WILL YOU BE JOINING THE GROUP?**

The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will be in Minneapolis from July 24-28, 2022! This is an inspiring opportunity for youth (Grades 8-12 as of Fall 2021) to gather with other Lutheran teens from across the country to worship together, share experiences and ideas, and serve through citywide service projects.

Registration begins soon. For more information, please contact Michelle Rose at [mrose@stjohnsudbury.org](mailto:mrose@stjohnsudbury.org) or 503-320-7245.

## **CONFIRMATION NEWS**

Mark your calendars for the Confirmation Kick Off Meeting on Sunday, September 19th from 6:30-8 PM. Confirmands and caregivers will gather in-person to discuss plans for the year, celebrate our shared faith, and have some fun!

Regular classes will begin on October 3rd from 6:30-8 PM. The schedule has been tweaked to allow families to share their Sunday meals at home. Registration materials will be coming out in the next week. We are planning for in-person classes and will follow all health protocols to make sure we are taking the best care of our Confirmation family. We will likely be outdoors when possible, but know that we will have HEPA filters for all classrooms and be masking up when we are indoors.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone and learning and growing together!

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

Following our celebration of Pastor Eric's installation, Sunday School classes will begin on October 3rd. Classes will follow the service and run from 10:50-11:50 AM. Registration materials will be coming out in the next week. We are planning for in-person classes and will follow all health protocols to make sure we are taking the best care of our Sunday School family. We will likely be outdoors when possible, but know that we will have HEPA filters for all classrooms and be masking up when we are indoors.

We have lots of learning and fun planned for the year. We can't wait to gather together again!