

Saint John Lutheran Church, ELCA

Newsletter

March 2019

Mary Oliver died recently, leaving behind a priceless legacy of poems. I have come to respect her as one of the greatest poets of our time. Her seeking faith is displayed in them as an invitation to the reader to join her on the way. In tribute to her, and as an invitation to you to walk the way of Lenten renewal, her poem "Thirst" follows.

In Christ,
Don

Another morning and I wake with thirst
for the goodness I do not have.

I walk out to the pond and all the way God has
given us such beautiful lessons.

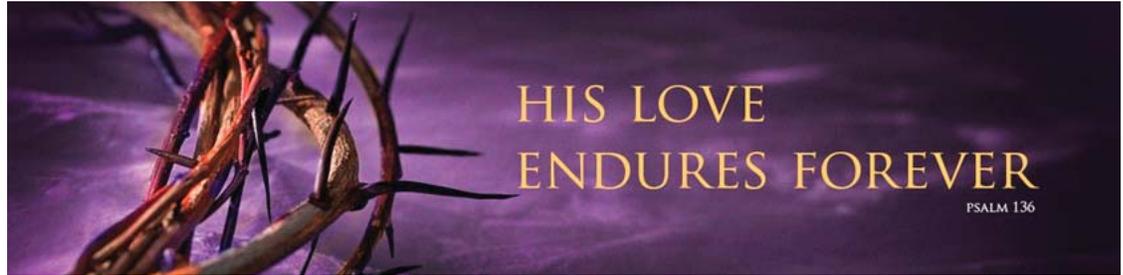
Oh Lord,
I was never a quick scholar but sulked
and hunched over my books past the hour
and the bell; grant me, in your mercy,
a little more time.

Love for the earth
and love for you are having such a long
conversation in my heart.

Who knows what
will finally happen or where I will be sent,
yet already I have given a great many things
away,
expecting to be told to pack nothing,
except the prayers which, with this thirst,
I am slowly learning.



Youth and Family News by Karen LaCure



SUNDAY SCHOOL DATES

March 3rd - Regular class schedule
No Confirmation

****March 6th** - Ash Wednesday - Lent begins

****Friday March 8th** - Youth Group Movie Night

March 10th - Regular class schedule
5:30 PM Confirmation

March 17th - Regular class schedule
5:30 PM Confirmation

March 24th - Regular class schedule
Youth Group Shopping
No Confirmation

March 31st - Intergenerational Sunday school
5:30 PM Confirmation



MOVIE & PIZZA NIGHT

YOUTH MOVIE NIGHT

Friday March 8th
6:30-9:00 PM

Join us in the Youth Room for pizza and a movie.

Showing: Black Panther



LENTEN CHALLENGE

During this season of Lent, give yourself a challenge... each day choose a clothing item you no longer need or want and place in a bag. At the end of 40 days you will have a large bag to donate! A bigger challenge fill an entire bag or box each day with household items and donate to Savers, St Vincent DePaul, Goodwill, or Household Goods. You will be helping others while helping yourself!

PAJAMA COLLECTION CONTINUES

The Youth Group continues to collect new pajamas through March 15th. The Boston Bruins, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), Department of Children and Families (DCF), and Cradles to Crayons® are coming together with organizations in your community to collect new PJs for local children living in low income and homeless situations. Our 12th Annual Boston Bruins PJ Drive kicks off February 1 and runs through March 15—aiming to collect 15,000 PJs to serve 15,000 children!



SUNDAY MARCH 24TH THE YOUTH GROUP WILL SHOP TIL WE DROP!

We shop to fill and assemble Easter baskets for the moms and children who live at Florence House in Worcester.

Ascentria's Teen Parenting Program serves low-income, single, teenage mothers and their small children who might otherwise be homeless, living in unsafe situations or substandard housing. Teen parents find support, counseling, training, advocacy and transitional housing within two Ascentria programs in Massachusetts. The Florence House in Worcester and the Ruth House in Brockton provide housing in safe, therapeutic residential environments that build individual strengths and help young families move toward self-sufficiency.

Serving 22 families, these programs assist teenage mothers and their children by providing:

Housing

Case management

Training in a structured setting that fosters the development of life skills and healthy family relationships.

These programs offer recreational activities that help build family bonds and healthy relationships. Children receive early intervention healthcare and other services. Young parents are required to work for a high school diploma or GED.

We will deliver the completed Easter baskets on Sunday April 7th.

INTERGENERATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday March 31st we will host our second annual "Who Is My Neighbor?" Intergenerational Sunday school. We will be joined by Barbara and Ira Smith, founders of Household Goods Inc. in Acton. With the assistance of our Outreach Ministry we will assemble starter kitchen kits and hear about the work that is done at Household Goods, "Helping People Make a Home."

The History

In 1990, Barbara Smith put a notice in her church bulletin asking for furniture donations so she and her husband, Ira, could help furnish an apartment for a woman and her young sons fleeing violence in San Salvador. After receiving far more than was needed, they offered the excess to the local housing authority, which then began telling people to call the Smiths directly if they were in need of household furnishings they needed but could not afford. From these beginnings, Household Goods was born.



In the early years, donations of goods outgrew the space available in the Smiths' yard and carport, and spread to occupy satellite locations around town. Occupancy of one such location, a church basement, led to incorporation as an independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit in 1999. The practicality of continuous steady growth to meet increasing need eventually necessitated centralizing the operation. In 2004, they settled into their permanent, 10,000 square foot home at 530 Main Street in Acton, a convenient location for donors, volunteers and clients. By matching the great need for household items with the generosity of the surrounding communities, Household Goods has served over 35,000 individuals and families since its inception, always mindful of maintaining an environment of dignity and respect for everyone involved. Each year, hundreds of volunteers commit over 30,000 hours of their time, working with over 300 social service agencies to help 2,500 families throughout eastern and central Massachusetts make a home.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS™
Helping People Make a Home.



Senior Ministry News

WHERE FRIENDS MEET

On February 12 the St. John Senior Luncheon staff served 49 meals to our guests who braved the weather forecast. They enjoyed a meal of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable medley, and tossed salad. Our Youth Group provided a mini cherry cheesecake desert. The tables were decorated with a Valentine's Day themed centerpiece created by Valerie Ripley and Karen LaCure.

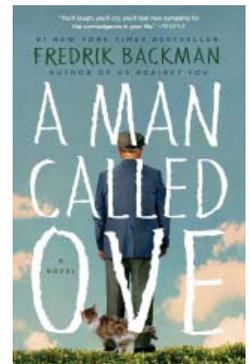
Several of our guests left after eating and before the snow started. Those who stayed were treated to a presentation on the courtship and marriage of Abigail and John Adams by Professor Gary Hylander. Some little known facts about the former president were revealed. John had been courting someone else and was about to propose when he met Abigail, who was about 16 at the time. He was attracted to her spirited manner, so he ultimately married her.

Our March 12 luncheon will feature a traditional Irish dinner: corned beef, cabbage, boiled potatoes, pearl onions and turnip. Jack "Ragtime" Radcliffe will be providing our entertainment. Festive St. Patrick's Day centerpieces, made by several the St. John Seniors-on-the-go crew under the direction of Suzanne Steinbach, will decorate our tables.

ST. JOHN SENIORS ON THE GO BOOK CLUB FOR MARCH

On March 19, 2019, the St John Seniors on the Go Book Club will discuss "A Man Called Ove: A Novel" by Fredrik Backman.

Ove is a curmudgeon—the kind of man who points at people he dislikes as if they were burglars caught outside his bedroom window. He has staunch principles, strict routines, and a short fuse. However, behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heart-warming tale of unkempt cats, unexpected friendship, and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul. All of which will change one cranky old man and a local residents' association to their very foundations.



Join us at the church at 11:00 AM on March 19, 2019 to socialize and stimulate your brain cells. All St. John seniors and their guests are welcome whether you are committed or just curious. No need to register in advance, but it is suggested that you read the book before you attend. Please contact Jan Nielsen at jrnielsen@charter.net or 978-549-3044 if you have any questions.

On April 16, 2019, the St. John Seniors on the Go Book Club will discuss "Homegoing: A novel" by Yaa Gyasi.

On May 21, 2019, the St. John Seniors on the Go Book Club will discuss "The Underground Railroad" by Colson Whitehead.

MUSICAL THEATER PERFORMING "OKLAHOMA" ON JUNE 5TH

St John Seniors on the Go is sponsoring an afternoon musical theater performance of "Oklahoma" at the North Shore Music Theater in Beverly, Ma. Go on line to check it out. The singing, dancing and costumes are fantastic in all musical theater performances at the NSMT. The performance will start at 2:00 PM, Wednesday, June 5th, but there is the opportunity to grab a sandwich or salad at the outdoor grill before the performance. Carpooling will be arranged.

Ticket prices (with the seasons ticket holder discount made available by Royce and Susanne Fuller) are \$59. Seats are will be open for none season ticket holders on March 4 and seats will begin filling up, so advance ordering is very important. With the theater in the round set up, all seats are close to the performance. It is recommended that those interested should request reservations in groups (two or more) of people who want to be seated together. Reservations will be made as soon as requests are made and we cannot be sure we will have adjacent seats available for those requesting reservations on a later date. Contact Royce Fuller at 978-897-8397, or roycefuller@verizon.net for questions, or to make a reservation.

NEW DISPATCHER FOR ST. JOHN MEMBER RIDES



Senior Ministry is pleased to announce that Carolyn and Larry Sweeney are assuming the role of dispatcher for St. John member rides, when needed, as Duane Packard is retiring from that role. Duane has done this valuable and much appreciated work for our members for a number of years and we are very appreciative of his fine work. Carolyn and Larry can be reached at 978-456-8418. Please be sure to contact them several days in advance of when a ride is needed so they will have time to contact potential drivers. Rides will be provided to any members of St. John who have a need for transportation to church, medical appointments, or other occasions when the member is unable drive, or secure a ride from someone else.

Miscellaneous News

A GRATEFUL STAFF THANKS YOU

Please accept my thanks for your generous Christmas gift. Mara and I will indeed put it to good use.
Don

Thank you for the generous Christmas gift. It is truly a blessing to be part of the St. John community.
"Cling to what is good" Psalm 93:4 God's blessings on all Karen

Your Christmas gift was so appreciated. Thank you all for all of your thoughtfulness and generosity.
Peace, Valerie

Thank you dearly for your kind Christmas Gift! It is an absolute pleasure to serve you and lead worship with Bart and the choir :) Sincerely, Corey

I just want to send my thanks to the Saint John congregation members for the generous Christmas gift. It was totally unexpected but much appreciated. Sincerely, Ron

Thank you so much for the generous gift. And for a windfall year of worship, music and fellowship.
Bart

Thank you all so very much for the warm welcome I continue to receive, and thank you for including me in the holiday gift. Your kindness and generosity is most appreciated! Fondly, Amie Alzapiedi

GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD UPDATE!

The Puppet Ministry thought you would like to know how your donations were directed this year. The piggy bank received \$768! WOW! The Outreach committee gives \$1000 toward our effort. Not only did we send a cow, 2 pigs, 2 goats and a lot of chicks but we focused on medical and educational needs. You helped stock a health clinic, provide vaccinations for children, food for an orphan and medicine for malaria. We also sent help for school supplies for children and we even helped to stock a whole classroom! We all worked together in a small way to make a big difference!

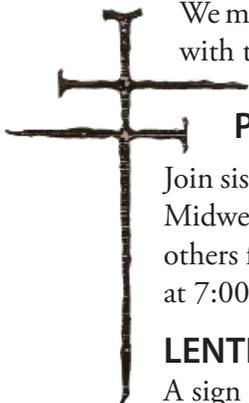


COINS FOR CHANGE

The Confirmation class is running an ongoing loose change drive starting in March and ending in September with the assistance of Outreach. The goal of this is to begin increasing our youth's "philanthropic" mindset. The youth, who are very excited, will pick 4-5 organizations and research these and from there decide which 2-3 will receive the monetary donations we collect over several months. "Coins for Change" will end about the same time faith statements are written. 2019 will be a bit of an oddity as we only have 1 student in his second year, but collectively the group can address the Congregation. We are working on an "at home" way to collect spare change. This goes well with our "Living Lutheran" unit of Colaborate.

ASH WEDNESDAY – March 6

We mark the beginning of the Lenten season of repentance and renewal with the liturgy of Ash Wednesday with two services on March 6; one at noon in all Saint's Chapel and one at 7:30pm in the Nave.



PRAYER AROUND THE CROSS ON WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Join sister and brothers for a meal, conversation and prayer on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM. Our first Midweek Lenten service begins on March 13. You can come from the occupations of your day and join others for conversation and a simple meal of soup, bread and salad beginning at 6PM. Our prayer begins at 7:00 PM and concludes by 7:30 PM. Come as often as you can!

LENTEN MIDWEEK SOUP SUPPER SIGN UP

A sign up sheet for volunteers to bring soup, bread or salad for our Lenten midweek supper & prayer is posted on the Worship & Music bulletin board.

ADULT FORUM SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

March 3: Living in Christ Beyond Sundays. Ippolit Matjucha will continue our discussions about witnessing and other ways to grow in our faith between services.

March 10, 17, 24: Lent program - Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "The Cost of Discipleship" remains an important book for Christians. During Adult Forum in Lent we will take up a number of themes from the book for discussion. The conversation begins on Sunday, March 10.

March 31: Intergenerational Sunday School: Lent and working with Household Goods.

BIBLE STUDY

Beginning Thursday, March 14, the Thursday morning bible study will explore First Corinthians 15 and materials related to it. This chapter is Paul's great reflection on the resurrection, as such, is a great topic for us to explore during Lent. Join us at 10:00 am on Thursdays.

Outreach Updates!

Jen Adams, Larry Kivimaki, Nancy Haugsjaa, Barbara Weiblen, Robin Koskinen, & Ann Kirk



SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, March 31, 2019 Household Goods Kitchen Kit Assembly. We will once again have an Intergenerational Sunday School Event to assemble kitchen kits for Household Goods in Acton. **Kitchen Starter Kits**, help jump start client kitchen drawers and also bring the added benefit of allowing families to cook at home rather than frequenting fast food restaurants, thus saving money and improving nutrition. Household Goods furnishes approximately 200 homes a month, so these kits are always in need. Last Spring, St John assembled 40 kits for distribution. Let's try for 50 kits this year! 😊

Items may be gently used or new. Please consider purchasing an item(s) to add to a kit or commit to providing a complete kit. Drop off your donations to the marked boxes in Heritage Hall March 1- March 25, 2019. **Here's a list of the most necessary items as requested by Household Goods to create a basic Kitchen Kit:**

- Can opener
- 2 pot holders
- Dishcloth or sponge
- 2 dishtowels
- Set of measuring cups and measuring spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Slotted cooking spoon
- Regular cooking spoon
- Metal or plastic spatula/lifter
- Tongs
- Paring knife
- Vegetable peeler
- Cooking fork
- Carving knife

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Our Staff

Donald Larsen, Pastor
Karen LaCure RN, Parish Nurse
Director of Youth and Family
Valerie Ripley, Admin. Assist.
Corey De Tar, Director of Choirs
Bart Dahlstrom, Organist
Ron Hagopian, Sexton



Thank You For Your Service

**Ryan
Higgins**

**Scott
Griffin**

**Victor
Osweiler**

**Jonathan
Battle**

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Rachel Florey	Brad Allen	Brian	Bill Moldwin
Richard	Ruth Fields	Johnny	Christopher Miller
David Donnelly	June Parker	Brian Young	Janice Potter
Lauren Rico	Fred Ripley	Joan Western	Brennan McGinnis
Rhonda Tibbetts	Paul Simeone	Joan LeDuc	Trish Sarvela Leiva
Charlotte McNeil	Barry	Bob Fratto	John Duane
Ken Kanady Noel	Ralph Nelson	Bob Eldredge	Jim Hansgate
Will Musselman	Mary Potter	Ginny Hershberger	



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