



St. John's on Madeline Island

St. John's United Church of Christ

Lighthouse Newsletter

March 2020

HOLY WEEK at ST. JOHN'S

Our Lenten journey culminates April 5 – April 12 as we honor and celebrate Holy Week and Easter. Please save these times and dates:

Palm Sunday, April 5, 10 am

Procession with Palm Branches and telling of the Palm Sunday story



Maundy Thursday, April 9, 6-8 pm

Soup Supper potluck followed by the story of the Last Supper and foot-washing ritual (bring soup, bread or dessert to share)

Good Friday, April 10, 4 pm

Taize Style Worship and Stripping of the Altar

Easter Vigil, April 11, 7 pm

A Service of Light, Water, Word, and Communion

Easter, April 12

Sunrise Service on Russell Bay (Time TBA)

Pot Luck Breakfast at St. John's (Time TBA)

Festival Service with Communion, 10 AM



Psst...All these events are listed in the calendar on our new website <https://stjohnsmadelineisland.org/>



Creating with Clay

Woods Hall is excited to announce that during the month of March, school age children will have an opportunity to create with clay at the Woods Hall Ceramics Studio! This class will be taught by Ruth Ann Tiesberg and is open to children grades 3-6. For more information, contact Tyna Waterhouse, Woods Hall Manager at woodshallgallery@gmail.com



Stories of Our Hearts

A circle of conversation, Stories of Our Hearts, gathers on Thursdays, 5:00 – 6:00 pm, upstairs in the library. Join facilitator Penny Gill on Thursday afternoons to share stories and conversation about life journeys.

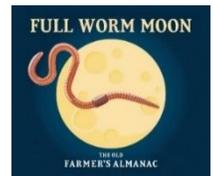


Stories of Our Hearts provides the time and space to reflect on what gives meaning to our lives and how we come to recognize the shape and direction of our lives. Come! We welcome anyone who wants to learn more about what we are discussing and exploring.

Full Moon Circle for Women

Our Full Moon Circle for Women is on March 8th when it's the Full Worm Moon. In Ojibwe, it is the Onaabani-Giizis or snowcrust moon.

The Full Moon Circle for Women is a time when we light candles for all the prayers of women who gather in person and in spirit. The glow of candlelight brings healing and peace. Julie Stryker leads the monthly Full Moon Circle for Women. Contact Julie at strykerj@yahoo.com for more information.



Rachel's Column

Dear friends,



I shared this story during my homily for our Ash Wednesday service about an experience I had on Ash Wednesday a few years ago that I will never forget. This story took place on the front lawn of my former church which sat on a busy street corner in downtown Berkeley, right next to a middle school. To hear the entire message, tune in to the webcast at

<https://video.ibm.com/channel/76AxbRFaCf2>

Being Blessed

"What is that?" he asked, putting down his skateboard and pointing to the small bowl of black liquid I held in my palm.

"It's ashes." I said. "Do you know about Ash Wednesday? For Christians, it's the day we remember that our bodies come from the earth and will return to the earth when we die."

He looked at me blankly.

I tried again, smiling, "We put ashes on our foreheads to remember that our flesh is beautiful and precious to God. And our lives are a gift from God. The ash reminds us our bodies don't last forever and so we try to live each day to its fullest."

"Oh." He smiled and continued to stand there.

"Would you like some?" I asked, trying to keep the surprise out of my voice.



"Sure!" He said, closing his eyes and taking an eager step towards me. I dipped my thumb in the grainy liquid, pushed his hair away, made the sign of the

cross on his forehead and said the ancient blessing, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

"Thanks!" he said, running off to join the rest of his middle school class from East Bay School for the Boys who happened to be on the lawn at the exact time I was



offering Ashes-to-Go to passersby on the side walk in front of our sanctuary. A few minutes later he was back with a friend "Can J. have ashes too? I told him what it was."

"Sure" I said, repeating the ritual.

A little while later another boy approached and asked shyly yet earnestly, "Can my scooter get ashes?"

I shook my head. "No. Ashes are for living things." Seeing his disappointment, I said, "But I could bless your scooter." He smiled widely and nodded, telling me his name and moving his scooter towards me.

"God, bless this scooter," I prayed. "May it bring T. safely and joyfully to where he needs to go today. Amen."

Soon there was a line of boys, some wanting ashes, others wanting me to bless their scooter, skateboard, even their necklace.



It reminded me of summers growing up in Eastern Washington when the temperature would reach 90 degrees, someone would turn on the hose and all us kids came running to get soaked.

As we enter this Lenten season of bringing intentional focus to our spiritual lives, may each of us have the grace of those boys to ask freely, joyfully and without shame for what we all need: to be blessed, to be seen, to be named, to be soaked in the truth of how beloved we are by God. And may we each have the privilege of offering this blessing to others in return.

Follow St. John's



Website: www.stjohnsmadelineisland.org



Instagram: @stjohnschurchmi



Twitter: @stjohnschurchmi



Facebook: facebook.com/stjohnsonmadelineisland



WOODS HALL

Gallery & Studios

Gallery Hours for March

Sunday 11:15 am – 1:15 pm

The Heart of Wisdom: Exploring the Contemplative Path - The Season of Lent

By Pastor Rachel

You are invited to participate – four different ways – in activities for spiritual growth at/through/with St. John's in Lent

Embedded within the teaching of each of the world's religious and spiritual traditions is an invitation into contemplation: learning to let go of the chatter of our mind and drop into a deep, spacious and holy silence. Within that silence, one meets the Divine Mystery and the true nature of one's own soul. Sometimes called mysticism or the wisdom tradition, contemplative spirituality emphasizes practices, such as prayer, silence, and surrender that strengthen our ability to ground and center one's whole life and being in God.

This Lent we will walk together on the contemplative path. We'll draw insights from Jesus' experience in the wilderness as well as the monastic practice and writings of the "desert mothers and fathers" – Christian leaders of the 4th century who, in response to what they saw as society's corrosive influence on one's soul, withdrew to the desert to reclaim and renew a lived experience of God's love.

Because, at its heart, the contemplative path is about transformation, it naturally includes both gifts and challenges and thus one should not embark on such a journey without support. Thus, I hope you will take advantage of one or two (or all!) of these Lent offerings:

Sunday Morning Worship 10 am in St. John's Sanctuary

Although solitude (i.e., being alone with self and God) is an important component of contemplative spirituality, isolation (i.e., being cut off from self, others and God) is not. Being together on the journey is crucial for both support and accountability. Join us on Sundays (in person or via the livestream/webcast) as we explore wisdom of desert spirituality found within the Hebrew and Christian scriptures as well as writings of the Desert Mothers and Fathers. Come and let the music, spoken word, ritual, and sacrament provide food for your journey.



March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5

Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer St. John's Sanctuary

Centering prayer is the simple yet transformative practice at the heart of the Contemplative tradition. Similar to meditation, Centering Prayer is a receptive method of silent prayer in which we consent to God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. All are invited to join Rachel in the St. John's Sanctuary Thursday mornings to learn the basics and practice together. No experience necessary.



**8:00 - 8:30 am on Thursdays
March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2**

.....●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

Friday Morning Bible Study St. John's Fellowship Hall

Join us on Fridays for a deep dive into the texts we'll be using for Sunday morning worship. We will explore Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, Abraham's call, the Hebrew people's 40 years of wandering (and lamenting) through the desert, and Ezekiel's Valley of the Dry Bones.



**10:30 - Noon on Fridays
March 13, 20, 27; April 3**

.....●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

The Heart of Wisdom Lent Retreat: An Invitation into Silence

This four-hour retreat will provide an opportunity for deeper reflection and practice in the contemplative journey, i.e. our inner life and relationship with the Holy. The retreat will include periods of silence, readings from sacred texts/poetry, and opportunities for simple artistic expression and gentle movement. Space is limited. RSVP to Rachel (pastor@stjohnsmadelineisland.org) by March 2nd.

1 -5 pm on Friday, March 6 at the home of Penny Gill

.....●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

Please join us in these activities for spiritual growth at/through/with St. John's in Lent!

NOTE: All these events are listed in the calendar on our website - <https://stjohnsmadelineisland.org/>

Church Council: Planning for the Future

By Debbie Knopf

It is an honor and privilege to be serving St. John's Church community as the current Council President. Our church community is an extension of our island community, including those who live here year-round, those who live here for just one or two seasons, and those who are regular visitors. All of these folks bring a strong commitment to, and excitement for, St. John's mission, to be a Christ centered church and a spiritual center for the whole community. St. John's has always worked towards making a difference for this community, particularly through its numerous ministries. Of these, the covenanted ministry of St. John's, the Woods Hall Gallery and Studios is the most significant.



This ministry, established in the mid-50's by Rev Otto Schroedel and his wife Velma, began from an intention to provide an outlet for the creative endeavor of islanders during the slower winter months, along with a potential to earn income from the sale of produced items when the tourist season returned.

We all have seen how Woods Hall has grown into the amazing studio and gallery that it is today, involving many artisans, from experienced to new. The Woods Hall community has become a strong one, whose mission is to nurture community and creativity on Madeline Island.

Pastor Rachel often describes how the Woods Hall ministry of St. John's was one of the big "draws"



that intrigued her about St. John's. "When we create, we open up our spirit and experience deep connection with the Creator's Spirit," remarks Rachel.

Since this past fall the Church Council has been working once again to evaluate where we are as a church now, and where we want to go in the future. This has included assessing both perceived and real barriers, our strengths and passions, and our goals or strategies for continuing to move us forward. This is especially true with the fast-approaching 100-year anniversary of St. John's in 2021. We want to ensure that St. John's continues to be sustainable and relevant in the next 100 years!

As we have communicated in past Lighthouse newsletters, we have recently made important advancements in our communications and technology (e.g., our new website and our upgraded livestream/webcast) to assure that we are reaching people and that people can reach us. Correspondingly, we know we need to upgrade our governance, financing, and basic organizational structures. We have grown in the last 50 – 100 years!!! We have adapted to meet the changing times and needs of the church and community, so we are looking at updates to our Constitution and organizational structures to better reflect how we are actually operating now in 2020. Of course, part of being sustainable is also developing an updated financial plan and viable endowment to ensure support of St. John's into the future.

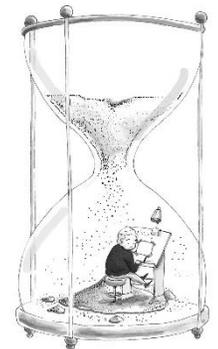


In analyzing all of our systems, it became clear to us that we also needed to update how the organizational structures of St. John's and Woods Hall partnered with each other, with Woods Hall as a ministry under the larger

umbrella of the church. Bringing more clarity to this relationship could only serve each participant better and promote growth for each.

Some of the issues recognized at the onset were the fact that there were so many interpretations about the relationship between Woods Hall and St. John's. Many were not aware that St. John's is legally and fiscally responsible for Woods Hall and provides the 503C status. Another concern, especially for such a small community, is that there is a duplication of efforts in some places, and no clear oversight in others. There has been significant staff turn-over at Woods Hall and many very part-time positions at both Woods Hall and St. John's without a clear process for review of performance, job descriptions, compensation equity, etc. Lastly, the amount of time and energy Pastor Rachel has needed to commit to governance issues at Woods Hall and administrative issues at both the church and Woods Hall has swallowed up much of her time that she would prefer to use in ministry to the community.

These issues combined represent a threat not only into our potential but to even maintain our strength as an organization.



Out of these concerns a Task Force was developed; the St. John's and Woods Hall Organization Review Task Force. It includes four leaders from Woods Hall, four leaders from St. John's, Pastor Rachel, and facilitator Sarah Ross Caruso, who brings 30 years of experience in governance and nonprofit issues as well as her own passion for St. John's and the island community. The Task Force is co-chaired by Michele Auger and myself.

Our goals are to:

- 1) review the organizational model and governance structure currently in place and assess strengths and areas of weakness and vulnerability;
- 2) draft a model for governance and organization of St. John's and Woods Hall that best supports our effectiveness in delivering on the mission of both organizations;
- 3) present this model for approval by the congregation at St. John's Annual Meeting on July 26, 2020.



Included in this process will be interviews with donors, stakeholders, artists, congregational members and the community at large; research of best practices/models for church governance for churches sponsoring community organizations, and holding open community meetings, in addition to the Task Force meetings. Both the Church



Council and the Woods Hall Board have been engaged in all the planning to date, so it is a true collaborative effort!

It is important to all of us to make sure that our community is fully aware of the rationale for and intent of the Task Force. Therefore, I have been asked to write this letter for both the St. John's Lighthouse and the Island Gazette. We will be giving notice of a couple of Community Meetings to talk with all interested parties and to gather more ideas later this spring. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to Task force members if you have questions or thoughts that could be helpful. The Task force members, in addition to Mitchie and myself, are Michael Childers, Lee Baker, Mark Pass, Tyna Waterhouse, Kathleen McCartin, and Jane Vogt.

As always, we ask for your prayers as we work to ensure that this church and its ministries serve the needs of the community here and beyond, today and into the future.

With God's Blessing, *Debbie Knopf*

Invitation to Play, Dance, Draw and Explore

By Regina Laroche

This is a life-giving opportunity to support our young families and get touched by the play, curiosity, energy, learning, joy, and tears of Island pre-schoolers. Most Mondays and Wednesdays Island pre-school mom's hold *Mooningwanekaaning Child Care Co-op* for their little ones - often at St. John's Church. We are inviting volunteers to join us and bless us with your presence. You're also invited to gift us with age-appropriate activities you love - music, art, nature...



The co-op is also flexible with volunteers' schedules. Thank you to those of you who have already volunteered. There's room for a few more volunteers! To volunteer or get more info, please contact Regina by email or phone: reginalaroche@hotmail.com or 715.747.6611

Soup Supper

Join us on Wednesday evenings for yummy winter soups and breads and lively discussion on topics that inspire and stimulate us all. Soup Supper and Fellowship is 6 – 7 pm. Discussion is 7 – 8 pm



Balance Exercise Classes

Louise McCray leads Balance Class every Tuesday and Thursday, 10 – 11 am in the Fellowship Hall. She guides exercises to improve your balance, maintain your strength and coordination, and give you confidence to stay active. All are welcome to drop-in!



BAZAAR – Treasures Abound

It's never too early to put this exciting event on your calendar!

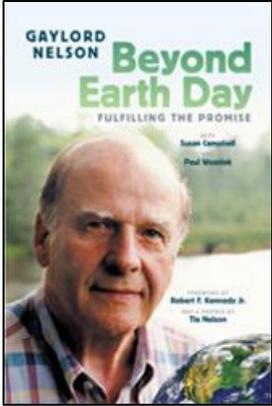
THURSDAY, AUGUST 6 & 7, 2020

And, if you're sorting through closets this winter, make a "pile of treasurers" for the annual Bazaar. Your donations are someone else's treasurers!

Celebrate Earth Day with St. John's on Sunday, April 19

by Joe Scarry

April 22nd, 2020 is the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, which was founded right here in Wisconsin by former governor, U.S. Senator, and advocate for protected wilderness status for the Apostle Islands, Gaylord Nelson. At St. John's, we will be observing Earth Day on April 19, the first Sunday after Easter. We will use this day to celebrate Creation and earthly stewardship.



In 2020, throughout Wisconsin and nationally, the United Church of Christ is emphasizing Creation Care. The theme for the annual meeting of the

Wisconsin Conference of the UCC (June 5-7 at Green Lake Conference Center) will be "Healing our Earthly Home." And throughout the UCC, people will be encouraged to participate in groups this spring reading *Cathedral on Fire!: A Church Handbook for the Climate Crisis* by Brooks Berndt, UCC Minister for Environmental Justice (available through uccresources.com).

Brooks writes with poetic passion but also with an eye toward the practical as every chapter ends with suggested, field-tested actions. Chapter topics include a:

- commitment to care for God's creation as our first calling
- scriptural basis in pursuing justice for a planet and its people
- moral foundation for understanding the climate crisis as an inequality crisis
- powerful, sacred language for articulating what fundamentally motivates people to act
- hope-giving history with the faith leaders who launched the environmental justice movement
- rich tradition of theology in times of crisis
- countercultural ethic of generational justice found in the Bible
- recognition of youth as the climate prophets of today



Please join our April 19 Earth Day observance and get in touch with Pastor Rachel if you would like to be part of the group going to the Wisconsin Conference gathering in June!

March: An Ode

Ere frost-flower and snow-blossom faded and fell, and the splendour of winter had passed out of sight,
The ways of the woodlands were fairer and stranger than dreams that fulfil us in sleep with delight;
The breath of the mouths of the winds had hardened on tree-tops and branches that glittered and swayed
Such wonders and glories of blossomlike snow or of frost that outlightens all flowers till it fade
That the sea was not lovelier than here was the land, nor the night than the day, nor the day than the night,
Nor the winter sublimer with storm than the spring: such mirth had the madness and might in thee made,
March, master of winds, bright minstrel and marshal of storms that enkindle the season they smite.

And now that the rage of thy rapture is satiate with revel and ravin and spoil of the snow,
And the branches it brightened are broken, and shattered the tree-tops that only thy wrath could lay low,
How should not thy lovers rejoice in thee, leader and lord of the year that exults to be born
So strong in thy strength and so glad of thy gladness whose laughter puts winter and sorrow to scorn?
Thou hast shaken the snows from thy wings, and the frost on thy forehead is molten: thy lips are aglow
As a lover's that kindle with kissing, and earth, with her raiment and tresses yet wasted and torn,
Takes breath as she smiles in the grasp of thy passion to feel through her spirit the sense of thee flow.

Fain, fain would we see but again for an hour what the wind and the sun have dispelled and consumed,
Those full deep swan-soft feathers of snow with whose luminous burden the branches implumed
Hung heavily, curved as a half-bent bow, and fledged not as birds are, but petalled as flowers,
Each tree-top and branchlet a pinnacle jewelled and carved, or a fountain that shines as it showers,
But fixed as a fountain is fixed not, and wrought not to last till by time or by tempest entombed,
As a pinnacle carven and gilded of men: for the date of its doom is no more than an hour's,
One hour of the sun's when the warm wind wakes him to wither the snow-flowers that froze as they bloomed.

By Algernon Charles Swinburne



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship and Communion, 10 am Blood Pressure Check, 11 am Woods Hall Gallery, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm	2 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm	3 Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am AI Anon, Fellowship Hall, 3:00 – 4:00 pm	4 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm Soup Supper, Fellowship Hall, 6 – 8 pm	5 Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer, 8 – 8:30 am Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am Stories of Our Hearts, Library, 5-6 pm	6 The Heart of Wisdom Lent Retreat, Home of Penny Gill, 1 – 5 pm	7 AA Meeting, 5:30 pm
8 Worship, 10 am Woods Hall Gallery, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm Full Moon Circle for Women, 7 pm	9 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm	10 Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am AI Anon, Fellowship Hall, 3:00 – 4:00 pm	11 Woods Hall Board Meeting, 8:30 – 10 am Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm Council Meeting, 4:30 – 6 pm Soup Supper, Fellowship Hall, 6 – 8 pm	12 Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer, 8 – 8:30 am Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am Stories of Our Hearts, Library, 5-6 pm	13 Bible Study, 10:30 -Noon	14 AA Meeting, 5:30 pm
15 Worship, 10 am Woods Hall Gallery, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm	16 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm	17 Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am AI Anon, Fellowship Hall, 3:00 – 4:00 pm	18 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm Soup Supper, Fellowship Hall, 6 – 8 pm	19 Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer, 8 – 8:30 am Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am Stories of Our Hearts, Library, 5-6 pm	20 Bible Study, 10:30 -Noon	21 AA Meeting, 5:30 pm
22 Worship, 10 am Woods Hall Gallery, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm	23 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm	24 Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am AI Anon, Fellowship Hall, 3:00 – 4:00 pm	25 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm Soup Supper, Fellowship Hall, 6 – 8 pm	26 Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer, 8 – 8:30 am Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am Stories of Our Hearts, Library, 5-6 pm	27 Bible Study, 10:30 -Noon	28 AA Meeting, 5:30 pm
29 Worship, 10 am Woods Hall Gallery, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm	30 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm	31 Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am AI Anon, Fellowship Hall, 3:00 – 4:00 pm	APRIL 1 Young Moms Group, 10 am – 12:30 pm Soup Supper, Fellowship Hall, 6 – 8 pm	2 Thursday Morning Practice in Centering Prayer, 8 – 8:30 am Balance Class, Fellowship Hall, 10 am Stories of Our Hearts, Library, 5-6 pm	3 Bible Study, 10:30 -Noon	4 AA Meeting, 5:30 pm



St. John's United Church of Christ

P. O. Box 14
Madeline Island
La Pointe, Wisconsin 54850
(715) 747-3945

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No.1
LaPointe, WI 54850

St. John's on Madeline Island ~ Celebrating 100 years in 2021



Photo credit: Bill Green

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

St. John's is a Christ-centered church and a spiritual center that welcomes all.