



SUDBURY
United Methodist Church
The Weekly Chronicle

In This Issue

[FROM PASTOR JOEL](#)

[Thank You](#)

[Dates to Keep In Mind](#)

[Coming Soon](#)

[PRAYER S](#)

[LEARN](#)

[CONNECT](#)

[SOCIAL JUSTICE](#)

[OUTREACH](#)

[Youth Group Bake Sale](#)

FROM PASTOR JOEL

Dear Friends in Christ,

Do you believe that the landscape we live in has an effect on us - maybe psychologically, or spiritually, or both? For example, do you imagine that people who live in tropical places like the Caribbean or the South Pacific more typically have a sunnier outlook on life? Do they seem more optimistic to you and more inclined to be positive than those who live, like we do, in a landscape that is overshadowed by winter's ice and snow? Or do you believe that people are pretty much the same wherever you go all around the world?

The reason I ask is this: Last Saturday, Wendy and I saw "Manchester by the Sea" at a local movie theater. If you haven't seen the film yet, I will try not to spoil it for you. If you have, you probably left the theater convinced, as I was, that director Kenneth Lonergan believes that people who live in New England are the victims of a spiritual or psychological paralysis that we are helpless to shake off. It's as if New England's wintry landscape is one of the film's main characters - a miserly villain whose icy fingers grip every heart from Maine to Connecticut freezing their ability to feel the freedom and warmth of forgiveness or to give that gift away. It also helps to know that both of Lonergan's parents were Manhattan psychiatrists.

Casey Affleck plays the focal character in "Manchester by the Sea," though I am reluctant to call him the film's protagonist. To earn that title, the profs who taught this English major how to read a novel always insisted that a story's protagonist was the character who changed or grew the most. Sullen, depressed, moody, and far more hidden than transparent, Lee Chandler, is called back to his hometown, a fishing village on the North Shore of Massachusetts, when his brother, Joe, dies far too young, though well within the time-frame diagnosed by his physician.

Lee Chandler has two responsibilities to fulfill in Manchester: to bury brother Joe and to raise Joe's orphaned nephew, Patrick, until he graduates from high school. The knowing

glances and inaudible whispers shared by the locals when they see and hear that Lee is walking Manchester's streets again suggest that he is a man with a bleak and tragic past. But Lonergan decides not to reveal anything about the secrets that haunt Affleck's Chandler until we are halfway through the movie. Far more astonishing is this: by the time we reach the end of the movie, two and a quarter hours later, Chandler hasn't changed one iota. He is still moody, sullen, and defeated. He is frozen. Stuck. Emotionally rigid. A lost soul.

And so are the rest of Manchester's citizens. Patrick, for example, the sixteen-year-old Lee is supposed to raise, is almost certainly an apple that has not fallen far from his family tree. The ex-wives of both Lee and Joe seem equally stuck whether they are actively addicted or groping to find sobriety. Even the film's supporting characters - a high school hockey coach, a local lawyer, and the family that eventually decides to adopt Patrick - all seem as cold and frozen, to one degree or another, as the winter-grey cemetery that refuses to be opened to receive Joe Chandler's body.

For all but four years of my life, I have lived here in New England. One branch of my family goes back to the first Europeans who made Amesbury, MA, their home in the 1630s. I love New England's four-season landscape more than I can say - though I acknowledge that winter can be - and often is - a psychological and spiritual challenge. If I thought, however, that forgiveness could be frozen out of my life by the iciness of living in the north, I think I would pack my bags and go elsewhere. Blessedly, I have always been given the warmth of Christ and the embrace of the church to remind me that forgiveness is always possible and no one has to stay stuck.

See you in church!

Pastor Joel

Thank You from Betty Farmer

Betty Farmer and her children thank everyone who helped to make Ken's memorial service on January 7 such a meaningful and healing occasion. She was grateful for the beautiful sermon Pastor Joel preached, for the music of the brass band whose players added so much to the day's hymns, to the volunteers who kept everyone fed during the collation in Hawes Hall, and to every person who braved the afternoon's fierce snowstorm to take part.

Dates to Keep in Mind

- January 27-29: Youth Group Retreat to Camp Berea
- January 29: Confirmation Orientation
- January 30: Love Wins-Adult Education Study
- February 5: Youth Group Bake Sale
- February 5 & 12: Special Church School Class for Grades 6-8
- February 19: Fill the Kids' Bags for Open Table

Coming Soon

Confirmation Journey Begins January 29

After worship concludes on Sunday, January 29, Pastor Joel will meet with 9th and 10th grade teens, their parents, and the mentors who have accepted an invitation to be part of the 2017 Confirmation journey. For several years, confirmands and their adult

mentors have focused on forming a spiritual practice of attending Sunday services of worship and reflecting on what is said and done during each week's hymns, prayers, and proclamation. To this core goal, Pastor Joel adds three classes on United Methodist history, theology, and polity. Teens also spend at least one day together in service to the wider community and may also attend worship at a synagogue, a mosque, or both. Questions? Please contact pastorjoel@sudbury-umc.org.

Love Wins: A New Adult Study Program

A new kind of Adult Study begins next week on Monday, January 30th. Come to the church and experience the class face to face or watch the class 'live' on Facebook, both starting at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Joel Guillemette will dig into author Rob Bell's "Love Wins" to ask, "Does everyone go to heaven? Is there a hell? Does love win?" The concluding sessions take place on Feb. 13 and 27. "Love Wins" can be ordered at www.cokesbury.com or other familiar online booksellers.

Music: Choir Chimes Are Back

Rehearsals will start on January 29, 2017, following Worship, (approx. 11:00 AM) in the Choir Room.

Come and enjoy working with a joyous team of ringers. Any one from fifth grade and older is welcome. The only requirement is that you can count to four and tap your foot in a steady rhythm.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry Stonebraker at 978-568-1596 or at sstoneb@aol.com.

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

Prayer Concerns on Sunday, January 22

- † Prayers are requested for a friend who was recently diagnosed with brain cancer. We pray for her and her family as she starts the long road of treatment.
- † Please continue to pray for our faithful and brave cancer group participants. This week, the group asks us to focus our prayers on newly diagnosed patients and their loved ones.
- † We request prayers of comfort for Claire Metaxatos whose husband Tony passed away last Friday. Tony lived a long and full life and will be missed greatly by his wife and daughters.
- † Martha and Bill Cooper request prayers and healing for the 14 year old granddaughter of a very good friend. The girl will have surgery on her leg this Friday.

Prayer Celebrations on Sunday, January 22

- † Margery and Bob Condon request prayers of celebration for their son, Jeffrey, and his fiancée, Martina Zartarian. They will be married this Saturday in Acton.
- † We celebrate last Saturday's demonstration of democracy in action as millions of people around the world joined together in a march calling for affordable health care, equal rights in the workplace, marriage equality, immigration rights, women's rights and climate justice. We appreciate the many people who came together to stand up for their beliefs and their willingness to support others.
- † The Outreach Commission celebrates the opportunity for SUMCers and other community volunteers to serve clients at *Open Table Food Pantry* in Maynard on January 16th. It was a great experience of sharing both food and friendship!
- † Karla and Andy Swanson, former SUMCers who have moved to North Carolina, celebrate having a new grandbaby. Sonja and Joe adopted a baby boy on January 1, 2017. He has a 6 year old sister.

LEARN

Youth

A Note from Anthony

Hello SUMC!

In just a few days, we are driving three car-loads of youth up to New Hampshire to Camp Berea and participating in a weekend retreat! The kids are excited to worship with intention, to learn in Bible studies and workshops, and to have fun at their rec centers and game rooms. We have been planning this retreat for months, and I am excited to see these plans come to fruition! Retreats are a special time that God can use. It involves

purposefully leaving the "real world" behind for a little while to focus only on our relationship with God and each other.

Retreats can offer something a regular church service cannot, because we leave our work (homework for the kids!), our worries, and our to-do lists behind. We are free to focus on God's love and presence in our lives. Please join me in prayer that this weekend will be used by God in a mighty way in the lives of our youth!

Blessings, Anthony

Church School

Children and families can expect the regular Sunday School groupings this Sunday, January 29th! After the children's moment, the 3-5 year old class will meet in their classroom, preschool room 4, in the Sunny Hill wing. 1st-2nd grade and 6th-8th grade will meet in their classrooms below the sanctuary. **There's a location change for the 3rd-5th grade group while our last Sunday School room below the sanctuary is being worked on! For the next few Sundays, the 3rd-5th grade Sunday School class will take place in preschool room 5: the Sunny Hill classroom closest to the Sanctuary.** After worship, please pick up your children in their classrooms to ensure that everyone makes it back to their families safely. See you in church!

Important Dates

6th-8th grade Sunday School Special Unit

During Sunday School on February 5th and 12th, our 6th-8th graders will be talking about stress. Plan to join Mrs. Prendergast for these fun-filled lessons about how your faith can help you survive Middle School!!

Youth Group Super Bowl Bake Sale

Why bake when you can donate?! After worship on Sunday, February 5th, the youth group will be selling super bowl treats! Pick up a sweet or savory snack for the big game! All donations will go towards the youth service trip this summer. Go Pats!!

Join Us! Let's All Put Together Kid's Bags for Open Table



Calling all Kids and "Kids at Heart"! Right after Church service on Sunday, February 12th, join in on decorating and filling 100 "Kids Bags" destined for Open Table's Food Pantry in Maynard. The filled bags will then be given out to children of Open Table clients during school vacation week. This marks SUMC's third year taking part in this community outreach opportunity!

ADULT EDUCATION

The Upper Room

The Upper Room booklets are available in the narthex. Help yourself to a free copy for your daily devotional readings. Or access it online by clicking here:

<http://devotional.upperroom.org/>

Join the Thursday Bible Study

- January 29: I Corinthians 1:18-25
- February 5: I Corinthians 2:1-12
- February 12: I Corinthians 3:1-9
- February 19: I Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
- February 26: Matthew 17:1-9

CONNECT

Talk to a Stephen Minister



Stephen Ministers can provide a listening, supportive and confidential presence. Each Sunday after worship a Stephen Minister is available to listen and to pray with you. If you would like to have a Stephen Minister "walk" with you on a regular weekly, every other week basis, please contact Pastor Joel.

No concern is too small to share with a Stephen Minister.

- February 7: Linda Lombardo
- February 12: Richard Smith
- February 19: Richard Smith
- February 26: Linda Cooper
- March 5: John Fraize
- March 12: Diane Hammond

The Lenten Booklet

Can You Help?

We still need at least ten more devotion writers to complete this year's booklet. Please consider writing one for us. We especially encourage new writers to give it a try. Although there will still be a sign-up sheet both in the office during the week and narthex on Sunday, the easiest way to sign-up and receive an instruction sheet is to send an e-mail to Nancy Sweeney at nsweeneyj@aol.com.

The devotions are not due until February 15th and the theme is "Making All Things New," but you can share any message or thoughts in your one page devotion. Our aim is to have a devotion for each of the 40 days and 6 Sundays in Lent and to have it available for our congregation to enjoy. Please prayerfully consider writing a devotion. Then let Nancy know in an e-mail or see Ann Hamilton in church on Sunday.

Thank you.

Your Lenten Book Editors, Nancy, Ann and Patty

SOCIAL JUSTICE

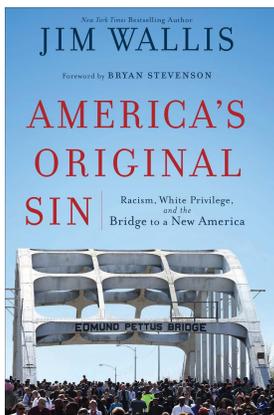
A Scene from the Boston Women's March for America



Social Justice Book Groups

In the New Year, the Social Justice Commission is leading book discussions on fiction and non-fiction literature dealing with critical social justice issues. Due to the weather, we had to reschedule our first meeting, and so we look forward to discussions of both America's Original Sin and The Underground Railroad coming up soon. We are also asking for book recommendations for future group discussions.

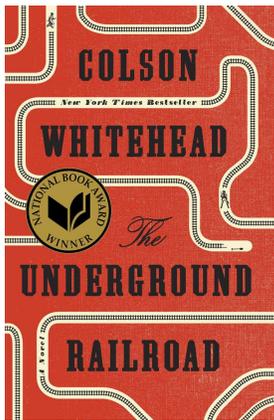
America's Original Sin by Jim Wallis - RESCHEDULED



As people of faith, how do we move beyond racial categories to become unified in the "body of Christ"? How do we restructure a justice system that is intrinsically biased against African Americans and Latinos? How do we welcome and treat "the stranger" in our land? This book raises these and other important issues that we look forward to discussing.

The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead - Monday, February 20th 7:00 pm

As the 2016 National Book Award winner for fiction, the Underground Railroad chronicles a young slave's experiences as she travels north to freedom. Critics agree that "The Underground Railroad is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share."



Where

Book Groups will meet at 22 Summer St, Sudbury, home of Moira and Leon Lataille. Should you have any questions, feel free to call Moira at 978.443.2568.

OUTREACH

This is your friendly food basket saying "hello" again and "thanking" you for faithfully finding me on my journey throughout the Church over the past many months.

If you remember, I used to hang out in the Church Narthex saying "Good Morning" before Church Service along with our wonderful official greeters and Acolytes. Then the construction began. I was part of the big move. For the time-being, I have now been stationed at the side entrance next to the O'Reilly Room. Do come by.

The need to fill my basket is as great as ever. So, think about putting that reminder rubber band around your wrist so the basket will again be like the "old days" - overflowing every few weeks. Our "outreaches" would love to renew those almost bi-weekly, food pantry deliveries.

As you stroll down the grocery aisles in the weeks to come, here are some suggested items to help fill me up.

- Solid white tuna
- Salad dressing
- Canned pineapple, chunks, slices
- Jarred spaghetti sauce
- Instant coffee
- Peanut butter, chunk and smooth
- Hamburger Helper.



Just one additional request: Please do not drop off items where the shelf-life date has expired. Unfortunately, these cannot be donated.

Again, many, many thanks from your loyal food basket!

YOUTH GROUP SUPER BOWL BAKE SALE



MAKE THE
RIGHT CALL...
Get Your Super Bowl Treats
AT THE
**YOUTH GROUP
SUPER BOWL
BAKE SALE**
February 5th
Immediately following church...
Donations are appreciated and will be used towards
summer youth mission opportunities.
DONATED BAKED GOODS ARE APPRECIATED! EMAIL: kbstraub1@verizon.net
Many thanks! Go Pats!

Please email if you can donate baked goods
at kbstraub1@verizon.net



Join Our Mailing List

Forward To A Friend

Sudbury United Methodist Church | alexandra@sudbury-umc.org | www.sudbury-umc.org