



ST. AIDAN'S

FEBRUARY 2021 VOLUME XXVI NUMBER 2

STAG & STAFF

St. Aidan's mission: To grow as a faith family so that everyone will experience God's love.

St. Aidan's Worship Services

Sunday Worship

Morning Prayer

8:30 am recorded

Drive-in Service

9:30 am -- Live drive-in and recorded

Sunday Coffee Hour

11:15 - Noon on Zoom

Meeting ID and password in Wednesday's E-News.

Wednesday Worship

Compline

6:30 pm recorded



St. Aidan's Valentine invitation!

What: Annual Parish Meeting

When: February 14

11 am

Where: ZOOM

Who: YOU!

**Your voice is important!
Your ideas and participation
irreplaceable!**

Watch the E-news for meeting id and
passcode.

Fast



Give



Lenten Services

Prepare



Pray



St. Aidan's Annual Pledge Campaign

Look for your letters in the US mail.
Please return your pledge to the
church office or on line --
as soon as possible!



**God.
others.**

Ash Wednesday -- February 17

1 - 2:30 pm -- Imposition of ashes with short prayers in church
for individuals and families with Pastor Loretta assisted by
an usher. Masks required, 5 minutes between persons, en-
ter by front door, leave by social hall door. Please be pa-
tient, waiting respectfully for the person[s] in front of you.

6:30 pm -- Join us for Eucharist, the imposition of ashes, and
music. The service will be held in St. Aidan's parking lot
and live-streamed on Facebook.

Lenten Compline Series:

Practice Shapes Believing

Wednesdays, 6:30 pm

February 24	Spiritual Practices
March 3	The Spiritual Practice of Prayer
March 10	The Spiritual Practice of Fasting
March 17	The Spiritual Practice of Self-Denial (Charity, Almsgiving)
March 24	Practice Shapes Believing

Recorded worship services can be accessed from St. Aidan's
Facebook Page or St. Aidan's Website: staidans-hartford.org



**Holy Mackerel,
Take a Look At This!**

**Opportunities galore in this
issue:**

Serve -- pgs. 2, 4, 7, 9

Reflect -- pgs. 7, 8, 10, 11

Participate -- pgs. 1, 3, 7

The Giving Tree



The Giving Tree is in Candy Lane Park, just a couple of blocks from St. Aidan's, which makes it a perfect 'neighborhood' project for St. Aidan's to support. The program, Meet me at the Giving Tree, is managed by one family and supported by many who contribute to the tree. See Facebook – "Meet me at the Giving Tree" --for more information.

*For those who are interested in supporting this neighborhood project, **bring warm winter items to the container by the front door.***



Mary Moran will collect and deliver the donations to the family who maintains the Giving Tree. Thank you always for your support and generosity for the larger Hartford community.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have

LOVE
for one another.

John 13.35



*From the
Pastor's
Desk*

Dear Friends,

During the month of February, it may seem as though we are oriented in two different directions. Half of the Sundays belong to the season of Epiphany and the other to the season of Lent. In the first part of the month, we celebrate the presence of Christ in the world, and then we transition to a time of fasting and penitence as we take up his cross. Lent is traditionally observed through prayer, fasting and self-denial; however, these spiritual practices should not distract us, rather they should increase our awareness of the ways Christ draws us to him. As we humbly confess our sins, we call upon Christ to forgive and heal our brokenness, resting in the assurance that through grace we will be made whole.

Let us welcome this opportunity for experiencing joy in Lent as we are renewed. Lent is a journey we share, and it can become for all of us a season of discovery. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, we pray that God will give us "new and contrite hearts," and we ask for God's perfect forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Lenten message and our spiritual practices can lead us into a closer relationship with Christ and call us to imagine how through grace, we can experience newness of life.

Plan to begin this journey by attending either the Imposition of Ashes in the afternoon or our Ash Wednesday Eucharist, including music and anointing with ashes in the St. Aidan's parking lot. For the following Wednesdays in Lent, I invite you to join us at 6:30 pm for the online services of music and message focused on the theme, "Practice Shapes Believing." You will find the link to all of these recorded services on the St. Aidan's website and on Facebook.

Ash Wednesday, February 17

1- 2:30 pm -- Imposition of Ashes in the church with brief prayers

6:30 pm Eucharist, with imposition of ashes in St. Aidan's Parking Lot

Lenten Series: Practice Shapes Believing

6:30 pm online

February 24 Spiritual Practices

March 3 The Spiritual Practice of Prayer

March 10 The Spiritual Practice of Fasting

March 17 The Spiritual Practice of Self-Denial (or Charity or Almsgiving)

March 24 Practice Shapes Believing

You remain in my prayers,
Esther +

A Miraculous Rescue:

Surviving Pike Lake's icy waters



Charles Gardner
Senior Staff Writer

"Save me O God; for the waters have risen up to my neck. I sink in muddy depths and have no foothold; I am swept into deep water, and the flood carries me away. I am wearied with crying out, my throat is sore, my eyes grow dim as I wait for God to help me." Psalm 69: 1-3

A thousand thoughts were racing through my mind as I gripped the slushy ice with my black gloves.

Was I going to die?

Could I do anything to prevent it?

What about my wife Pat, sitting in bed with a fever and without any idea I was fighting for my life?

What about my family and close friends? What about the next life?

I realized I still had hope of living here on earth, and I focused on doing everything I could to make that happen.

I had fallen through the thin ice on Pike Lake, about 150 yards from the state park beach, on an ill-considered snowshoe adventure. I would be gone for 20 minutes, I told myself. I didn't even take my phone or wallet.

Suddenly, a huge crash into the water sent my poles flying and put me in a very dangerous situation.

I tried to signal to some hikers at the park, but they were too far away and didn't hear me. I tried to think of a way out but knew if I tried to climb up on the ice I would crash through again. All I could do was hang on to the icy ledge or I would be submerged in deep waters.

I started screaming for help, desperately hoping someone would hear me.

Someone did.

I spotted a hiker near the south end of the beach and yelled, "I need help soon. I can't hang on much longer. Call 911."

The hiker soon was waving to tell me help was on the way, although I was getting colder by the second and I was confused about his signals. I told myself to hang on as long as I could.

Eventually I heard the sirens and saw the flashing lights, a parade of emergency vehicles headed toward the beach. That gave me real hope.

It seemed like an eternity before the rescuers could reach me. Brian Wolters and Kyle Wenzel bravely entered the water, and I was aware of Brian coaching me and shouting instructions to his team. He separated his shoulder, suffering a serious injury while saving me.

So many people came to my aid that day, on December 30, and allowed me to see a New Year. Hartford Fire and Rescue chief Paul Stephans later told me what a narrow escape I had.

I don't remember the Flight for Life trip from Aurora Hartford or anything until I woke up in the ICU at Froedtert Hospital the next morning.

I discovered later that Dr. Dan Worman led the emergency room team that treated me at Froedtert. Dan is the son-in-law of my dear friend, **Father John Groff**, a member of St. Aidan's. Ben Hoffmann, son of my *Stag & Staff* editor Micki Hoffmann, was on the scene as an EMT and rode in the ambulance with me to Aurora.

My ICU nurse Lindsey told me I was able to cling to the ice for 40 minutes because of

It was humbling to find that so many people had worked selflessly to save my life. God's grace worked through them.

all the walking I had done in 2020, often 40 to 50 miles a week. That really lifted my spirits that first morning in the hospital, and she stayed with me throughout the day until I was transferred to a room on the ninth floor.

Nurse Cheryl hugged me and cried with me before I was discharged from the hospital on Friday morning. Dr. Lara Voigt was upbeat with me during my stay and said she would get me home in time to watch Northwestern's bowl game, and she did!

It was humbling to find that so many people had worked selflessly to save my life. God's grace worked through them.

I am recovering well with daily support from friends and family, and I thank everyone for their prayers. I am walking again and working on an exercise bike while steadily regaining strength.

I am able to see my wife and hug her, to talk to friends again, and to share in life's joys and sorrows. I am able to see the beauty around me, a pink sunrise over Pike Lake, seven deer romping in the snow off Powder Hill Road, or snowflakes coming down on a winter evening.

I am truly thankful and praise the Lord for this.

"But by thy saving power, O God, lift me high above my pain and my distress, then I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with Thanksgiving." Psalm 69: 29-30

St. Aidan's Reader Schedules --



DATE	READER	Morning Prayer Recorded	Eucharist Recorded	Eucharist Live
February				
7	L. Molenda	X	X	
	M. Hoffmann			X
14	B. Mendoza	X		X
21	L. Mercado	X		
	M. Weber			X
28	M. Schmidt	X		X



DATE	READER	Morning Prayer Recorded	Eucharist Recorded	Eucharist Live
March				
7	A. Marsh Meigs	X		
	M. Hoffmann			X
14	B. Schrunk	X		X
21	A. Pollock	X		X
28	L. Molenda	X	X	

Volunteer to read for St. Aidan's! Contact Micki Hoffmann [mphoffmann70@gmail.com].

Readings for each service can be found at: www.lectionarypage.net

Procedure: All **READERS** must contact Scott **PRIOR** to any recording. Scott will provide the appropriate introduction and closure to each of the readings that will be recorded and any specific directions depending on how the recording will take place. The **READER** will
 record his/her readings at home using ZOOM
 record at the parish at a designated time (usually every other Thursdays, time to be arranged [tba])
 record during a Zoom meeting with Scott [tba]

Recordings are due no later than 5:00pm on the Friday prior to assigned weekend.

Scott Eakins
 414-704-6186
staidanmusichtfd@gmail.com

February

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Tom Barnes
- 6 Diane & Tom Pirc
- 19 Ken Dinco
- 21 Barb Kaker
- 25 David Pietsch
- 26 Donna & Ken Dinco
- 28 Barbara Marinelle



Megan Fairchild Wetzel's Sunday School class held a Zoom baby shower for her last Sunday! Megan received lots of cute baby items, including sleepers, toys and books. The girls' favorite gift was a "snot sucker" for the baby! Megan and Matt will welcome their little one in early February. Please keep the Wetzel family in your prayers.

We are sad to announce two deaths in the parish.

Ralph Daley, brother of **Dennis Daley**, died early in January. He was a long time resident of Hartford who worked as a mason for over 35 years. His time was spent following the Brewers and Rubicon baseball, but most of all with his family. He is survived by six siblings, two children, and eight grandchildren

Aileen Lake, wife of **James Lake** and mother of **Lisa Lake** also died in January. She worked 20 years at the Post Office and recently at Kwik Trip. She is survived by her husband, five children, and eight grandchildren who remember her sewing, cooking, and generosity.

Our deep sympathy to both families.



Alice's Restaurant

I'm starting to think about planting seeds. The order is in, and the garden is being organized in my mind's eye, so we must be getting to the other side of winter, not gone but beginning to fade a little bit. Other things may be fading too. I'm looking forward to vaccines, a little easing of the concern I feel when its necessary to go into a store, seeing friends in person, not on the computer screen, giving someone besides Bruce a hug. I do, however, think technology is wonderful. Today we ate our lunch with our son and his family who were eating supper in Germany. There was salad and tuna melt or pasta with veggies and bacon. It's not the same as a visit. But, we do our best and wait.

How are you doing? Are the Christmas things all put away? Are the bird feeders filled and that closet you were clearing out all done? Me neither. I have to leave a few things for tomorrow after all. In the meantime, I'll give you a sweet treat this month. Valentine's Day is coming and maybe you can share this with someone.

It's not lemon meringue but its close and simpler to make.

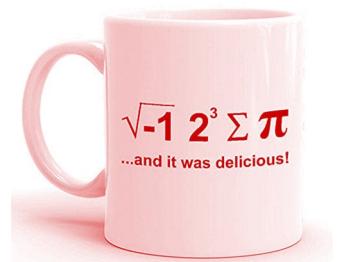
Lemon Sponge Pie

350* 45-50 minutes

1 unbaked pie shell, from the store is fine

3 egg whites, beaten until stiff

3 egg yolks
 2/3 C. of lemon juice (or two lemons, zest and juice)
 1 C. milk
 1 1/2 C. sugar
 1/3 C. flour
 1/4 t. salt



Beat the egg whites and set aside. Stir together the remaining ingredients. Fold the mixture into the whites and pour into the pie shell. Bake at 350* for 45-50minutes. This can also be baked without the piecrust in a casserole dish. Either way, Happy Valentine's Day!

Alice Pollock

Weather Cancellation Information

If the weather outside is frightful, check the following sources for church service cancellations:

Television
 FOX 6
 TMJ 4

Radio

The Lake FM 94.5
 WTMJ AM 620
 WTKM AM 1540 &
 FM 104.9





From Donna Dinco's Desk

Generosity begins the Gratitude

We are grateful for the abundance of Christmas cookies that you baked for the ECW Christmas Cookie Sale. Your generosity allowed us to donate cookies to the Hartford Police Department, first responders at the fire station, and health care workers.

In response to that generosity, we received the following from the HPD:

To Everyone at St. Aidan's:

I wanted to send you a short "thank you" note for showing your appreciation to the Harford Police Department by bringing in such a large assortment of cookies – Delicious!

With times being what they are today, it was a terrific gesture to our department to let everyone here know that our community supports us. It may not feel like it by looking at the news, but the amount of encouragement we are receiving from our community has been terrific.

As the head of the department, I deeply appreciate your support for all of my officers. Your caring gesture was enjoyed by everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott MacFarlan
Chief of Police

I am grateful for all that St. Aidan's has accomplished and the gift we have been to each other. In particular, you have been sharing your time with phone calls, cards or videos chats, just to check-in; sharing your talents with children in worship center, zoom technology, music, baking or crafts; sharing your resources that have enabled our ministries.

Our stewardship campaign, *Faith-filled Generosity*, is a time to reflect on how we share our time, talent, and treasure with our church and community. Again, I invite you to consider how your response to time, talent, resources and 'attending' has shaped our faith community and your family and friends who gather with you. May we continue to be gifts to each other and our community throughout the coming year.

*"I can no other answer make but thanks,
and thanks, and ever thanks."*

— William Shakespeare

Blessings,
Donna

How to reach us —

Church Mailing Address:

670 E. Monroe Avenue
Hartford, WI 53027

Church Office E-mail:

secretary@staidans-hartford.org

Church Website: www.staidans-hartford.org

Church Phone: 262-673-7273

The Rev. Esther Kramer

262-309-7661

estherkramer0806@gmail.com

Aimee Hennings, Administrative Assistant

secretary@staidans-hartford.org

Scott Eakins, Organist

Mike Weber, Treasurer

Vestry Wardens

Donna Dinco

Sandy Koeller

Vestry

Pat Gardner

Micki Hoffmann

Brian Schunk

Gary Stage

Vestry Clerk

Linda Weber

Stag and Staff

Newsletter of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church

Published monthly

Deadline: Third Sunday of the month

Micki Hoffmann, Editor

Contact: mphoffmann70@gmail.com

or 262-673-2903



Prayer Chain

If anyone has a prayer need for someone or something, please call the church office.

**Prayer Chain volunteers needed.
See page 7.**



Aidan's Angels

Mary Moran -- Super volunteer!
UTO chair, Giving Tree facilitator,
Sunshine spreader.

Ron Schnorenberg -- Super volunteer!
Says yes immediately to requests!
Cleaning, church office work, Good Samaritan.



We are in the process of updating the **Prayer Chain**. If you are interested in being on the telephone Prayer Chain, please let **Alice Pollock** (262 707 3456) or **Ron Schnorenberg** (414 416 9118) know. You will be contacted via phone, email or text when there are prayers needed. To put someone on the church prayer list for the Sunday bulletin, please call the office 262-673-7273

A bright light for all of us!

Wednesday, January 20, 2021, was the inauguration of the 46th President of the United States, Joseph Biden. But, as *The Morning Brew*, a business blog, put it:



“Good morning. Not many people can upstage Lady Gaga, J.Lo, or a new president. But 22-year-old poet Amanda Gorman managed to steal the show at the inauguration with her transfixing poem, **‘The Hill We Climb.’”**

The whole poem is worthy of several readings. Here is an excerpt to whet your appetite for an extraordinary poetry experience:

*When day comes, we ask ourselves, where can we find light
in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry. A sea we must wade.
We braved the belly of the beast.
We’ve learned that quiet isn’t always peace, and the norms
and notions of what “just” is isn’t always justice.
And yet the dawn is ours before we knew it.
Somehow we do it.
Somehow we weathered and witnessed a nation that isn’t
broken, but simply unfinished.*



*And so we lift our gaze, not to what stands between us, but
what stands before us.
We close the divide because we know to put our future first,
we must first put our differences aside.
We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one
another.
We seek harm to none and harmony for all.
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true.
That even as we grieved, we grew.
That even as we hurt, we hoped.
That even as we tired, we tried.
That we’ll forever be tied together, victorious.
Not because we will never again know defeat, but because
we will never again sow division.*



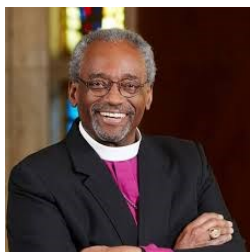
YES!

It's the St. Aidan's
Bazaar elf!

With great optimism and faith, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church Women are planning for the

**Annual Christmas Bazaar
Saturday, December 4**

Start the sewing machines, find the knitting needles, get out the crafts ! We're going to have a wonderful bazaar with all the trimmings! Plan your participation now -- it's an **ALL CHURCH THING!**



Presiding Bishop Curry's Word to the Church:

Who shall we be?

And now in the name of our loving, liberating, and life-giving God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

In another time of national crisis, another time of danger for our nation, in 1865 on March the fourth, Abraham Lincoln concluded his second inaugural address with these words:

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

Lincoln knew in that moment, in the moment of a national crisis, a moment of great danger, that such a moment was a moment of decision, when a nation, when a people must decide who shall we be? What kind of nation, what kind of people shall we be? A hundred years later, Martin Luther King faced the same reality. Who shall we be? The civil rights movement was waning. The great victories that had been won had been won. And yet now questions of poverty and economic despair and disparities raised an awesome specter on the nation. We were at war.

We were at war in another country, but there was war on our streets. The nation was deeply divided. Cities burned. There were riots. Riots at national conventions of political parties. The future of the nation was in question, and it was at that time that Dr. King realized that in moments of danger, a decision must be made. And he titled his last book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community*. I believe as he believed, as Abraham Lincoln believed, as I believe you believe, that we must choose community. Chaos is not an option. Community is our only hope.

The truth is Dr. King spoke often of all that he did and labored for was for the purpose of realizing as much of the Beloved Community of God as

it is possible on this earth. He spoke of Beloved Community, the Bible, the New Testament; Jesus spoke of the kingdom or the reign of God. Jesus taught us to pray, and to work, and to labor for that Beloved Community, that reign of God's love in our time and in our world, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth just as it is in heaven. Those are our marching orders from Jesus himself.

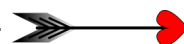
I am a follower of Jesus of Nazareth because I believe that his way of love and his way of life is the way of life for us all. I believe that unselfish, sacrificial love, love that seeks the good and the welfare and the well-being of others, as well as the self, that this is the way that can lead us and guide us to do what is just, to do what is right, to do what is merciful. It is the way that can lead us beyond the chaos to community.

*Chaos is not an option.
Community is our only hope.*

Now, I know full well that this may to some sound naive, to others, idealistic, and I understand that. And yet, I want to submit that the way of love that leads to beloved community is the only way of hope for humanity. Consider the alternative. The alternative is chaos, not community. The alternative is the abyss of anarchy, of chaos, of hatred, of bigotry, of violence, and that alternative is unthinkable. We have seen nightmarish visions of that alternative. We saw it in Charlottesville just a few years ago when neo-Nazis marched through the streets of an American city, chanting, "Jews will not replace us." That alternative is unthinkable. We saw it in Minneapolis-St. Paul, where a public safety officer knelt with his knee on the neck of another human being. A child of God, just like he was, and snuffed out the breath of life that God gave him. The alternative is unthinkable.

And we have seen it this past Wednesday, when a monument to democracy, the Capitol of the United States of America, was desecrated and violated with violence by vandals. Lives were lost. A nation was wounded. Democracy itself was threatened. My brothers and sisters, this way of love that Jesus taught us when he said, "Love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself." This way of love that Moses taught even before Jesus. This way of unselfish, sacrificial love, it is the way to redeem a nation, to save a world. It is the way of hope for us all. But do not make the mistake of thinking that I speak of a sentimental and emotional love.

Continued on the next page.



Jesus spoke of love most consistently the closer he got to the cross. This way of love is the way of sacrifice, the way of unselfishness, the way of selflessness, that seeks the good of the other as well as the self. And that is the way of the cross, which is the way of life.

And if you don't believe me, ask another apostle of love. Not Dr.

I am a follower of Jesus of Nazareth because I believe that his way of love and his way of life is the way of life for us all.

King, not Abraham Lincoln, ask Archbishop Tutu. Ask one who has given his life for the cause of God's

love in the way of Jesus. Ask him; ask Nelson Mandela in your mind. Ask them what love looks like. They knew that the way of love was the only way that could guide South Africa from what could have become a bloody nightmare and civil war to the way that could build a nation.

And it was not sentimental. Remember truth and reconciliation. They had to face painful truths. They had to do what was just and what was merciful. They had to do what the prophet Micah said, that the motivation and the guide was love. Archbishop Tutu said this:

Love, forgiving, and being reconciled to our enemies or our loved ones is not about pretending that things are other than they are. It is not about patting one another on the back or turning a blind eye to the wrong. True reconciliation exposes the awfulness of the abuse, the hurt, the truth. It could even sometimes make things worse for a while. It is a risky undertaking but in the end it is worthwhile, because in the end only an honest confrontation with reality can bring forth real healing. Superficial reconciliation only brings superficial healing.

This is the way of love that can heal our hurts, that can heal our land, that can help us to become one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all. So, I would ask you to do two things. I'm asking you to make a commitment, a renewed commitment, to live the way of love as Jesus has taught us and to do it by making a commitment to go out and bless somebody. Bless somebody you disagree with. Bless somebody you agree with. But to go out and bless somebody by helping somebody along the way. Go out and bless somebody by listening to their

story and their life. To go out and be an instrument of God's peace, an agent of God's love.

And then I would ask you to pray. Pray for this nation but pray with some specificity. Pray that we may have the wisdom and the courage to love.

*God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy pow'r.
Crown thine ancient church's story,
bring her bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour.*

*Harry Emerson Fosdick,
God of Grace and God of Glory*

With malice toward none, with charity toward all. With firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right. Let us strive to finish the work, the work that we are in. To bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan. To do all which may achieve and cherish, a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

God love you. God bless you. And may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.

"From Many, One: Conversations Across Difference"

January 11, 2021

Starting January 18 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), The Episcopal Church launches "From Many, One: Conversations Across Difference," a campaign urging Episcopalians and our neighbors to engage in the spiritual practice of listening and honest conversation across the many differences that separate us, starting with four simple questions:

**What do you love?
What have you lost?
Where does it hurt?
What do you dream?**

Inspired by the Latin phrase on the U.S. seal – E Pluribus ("from many") Unum ("one") – the campaign is designed to offer a faithful perspective and time-tested practice for knitting deeply divided communities into a diverse, more perfect union. In a cultural moment shadowed by pandemic, fractious politics, and deep division within families, communities, and nations, Episcopalians can partner in simple ways to celebrate difference, listen with deep curiosity, and promote healing.

Love one another
as I have loved you.

FAITH & FAMILY




How to talk with kids about race

By Judith Roberts

For people of color, talking about race and racism often isn't optional but rather survival. Being judged by skin color is still a reality in our society. For white people, talking about race and racism is often avoided—partly out of the fear of getting it wrong; partly out of the privilege of not having to discuss it. As parents and caretakers, we are our children's first teachers. Even if we aren't talking about race, our children are watching and listening to our words and actions. The earlier you begin, the better—educational experts believe that you can start talking about racial identity with kindergartners.

Talking about race and racism begins with you. Focus less on getting it right and realize that this is an ongoing journey. Ask questions. Join a conversation in your congregation or community about race and racism. The more you practice conversing about race, the more you will feel confident talking about it with your children.

Some key points to keep in mind:

- **Writer Audre Lorde once said:** “It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences” (*Our Dead Behind Us: Poems*). Our identities are shaped by our race, gender, religious beliefs, political leanings and geographical locations. Start by exploring your story of racial identity and ancestry. Then learn about others' stories. It's important to know that celebrating your heritage doesn't mean you can't value and affirm the richness of others.
- **The ELCA's baptismal covenant calls us to “strive for justice and peace in all the world.”** Don't stop with just talking about race—discuss actions for racial justice. When people and communities experience bias because of their skin color, religious beliefs, gender and/or sexuality, then none of us are free to live in the beloved community God intends for us. 

Activity

One way to approach a conversation with children is by introducing books, images, worship materials, toys, TV shows and movies that affirm diversity and inclusion.

Preschool through third grade:

- *The Skin You Live In* by Michael Tyler (Chicago Children's Museum, 2005).
- *Happy to Be Nappy* by Bell Hooks and Chris Raschka (Jump At The Sun, 1999).
- *The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz (Square Fish, 2002).

Third through sixth grade:

- *Let's talk about race* by Julius Lester (HarperCollins, 2008).
- *The Return of Gabriel* by John Armistead (Milkweed Editions, 2002).

Seventh through 12th grade:

- *Witness* by Karen Hesse (Scholastic, 2003).



Judith Roberts is ELCA program director for racial justice ministries.

From the *Living Lutheran* magazine



St. Aidan's Library has all kinds of books -- inspirational, historical, fiction, non-fiction. Literally, something for everyone! Below is a sampling for your Lenten reading -- take a break from the screens and enjoy a quiet reflection, a lively story, or a new perspective!

When you choose a book, call **Micki Hoffmann** [673-2903] or email [mphoffmann70@gmail.com], and she will deliver it to you at your convenience. Not as many calories as pizza and lasts longer!

Library Rules — very strict!

Borrow books any day! Bring them back someday!

Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening – C. Bourgeault

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