Weekly News from St. Matthew's United Methodist Church

Acton, Massachusetts



All hands working together:
Congregational Budget Meeting March 12

Growing in Faith, Walking in Love March 07, 2017

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

CHURCH NOTICES, SERVICES, UPDATES, EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Lenten Worship Opportunities
- What Does the Confederate Flag Men to You? March 7
- Church Potluck Lunch and Meeting March 12
- Immigration Breakfast Seminars at St. Matthew's March 18
- FREE Family Concert March 18
- Ruth Circle Meeting March 15
- Meet the New Executive Director of Rolling Ridge March 16

FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Sunday Morning Adult Formation 9:15 am
 - Living the Questions
 - The Meaning of the Cross
- Children & Junior High School
- Senior High Learning and Exploration
- Thursday Women's Study Group 9:30-11:30 am
- Spiritual Life Retreat March 31-April 2
- Rolling Ridge Day Apart: God's Healing Touch March 16

REACHING OUT

Exploring Race – Workshop Series, March 23 & 30, April 13

CHURCH CALENDAR

8 2 3 7 8 5 4

Daylight Saving Time Begins – March 12 PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD



CHURCH NOTICES, SERVICES, UPDATES, EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES



Lenten worship opportunities

Join us for a simple contemplative prayer service. Wednesdays, at noon and 7 p.m.

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### What does the Confederate Flag Mean to You? - March 7

Recently a home in Boxboro has been flying a Confederate flag. What does that mean to you? Join a community discussion about the symbolism of the Confederate flag tonight, Tuesday, at 7 p.m. at the Sargent Memorial Library in Boxboro. For more information go here.

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Church Potluck Lunch and Meeting – March 12

Church Potluck Lunch and Meeting is this Sunday, March 12th immediately following the second service. This meeting will focus on the 2017 budget.

The Meeting is an opportunity for all Church members to review the draft 2017 budget (celebrating those who have increased their pledge since February 22nd) and to hear from you – your hopes and fears about the proposed budget, along with your insights and ideas.

Please join us in this worshipful work and sign up on the Church website to help by setting up, bringing food to share, and/or cleaning up afterward.

In gratitude for the St. Matthew's community – Marcia Rasmussen

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## Immigration Breakfast Seminars at St. Matthew's

As federal agents crack down on undocumented immigrants, you may be looking for ways to protect your co-workers, friends and neighbors vulnerable to ICE raids, arrest, and fast-track deportations.

St. Matthew's can show you how to help, as the church presents a series of workshops and discussions about immigration.

On **Saturday, March 18**, St. Matthew's welcomes Reverend We Chang of the Belmont-Watertown United Methodist Church. Rev. Chang organized and launched the New England branch of Justice for Our Neighbors, which seeks to help vulnerable immigrants. Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON) is a faith-driven ministry, welcoming immigrants into our churches and communities by providing free, high-quality immigration and legal services, education, and advocacy. JFON is sponsored by UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Rev. Chang will explain how Justice for Our Neighbors is working with immigrants, discuss issues faced by documented and undocumented immigrants living in Metro-West, and suggest how concerned citizens can help.

You are invited to a light breakfast at 8:30 on March 18 followed by a discussion with Rev. Chang. The breakfast and discussion are free, and child care will be provided. If possible, please sign up at <a href="http://saint-matthews.org/">http://saint-matthews.org/</a> so the church can plan for breakfast.

Topics of future workshops include the Massachusetts Safe Communities Act (a bill sponsored by Sen. Jamie Eldridge), immigrants' legal rights, and a sanctuary movement at a nearby church.

## **FREE Family Concert**



On March 18 at 4 pm St. Matthew's Welcome, Outreach & Witness Ministry is sponsoring another free family concert for members of St. Matthew's and the surrounding communities. We have invited the well-known and popular Ed Morgan once again and asked Pastor Steve to appear, as well. The event will include a free pizza party after the concert (donations accepted to offset costs).

This is a wonderful chance for members of all ages to enjoy listening, singing, and dancing and welcome young families who will visit the church. We need as many members as possible to be on the "welcoming team." (Please don't assume others will fulfill this need; we never have enough St. Matthew's folks in attendance.)

Flyers and hand-outs are available for posting and distribution in the community. Please register on the St. Matthew's website to help us plan for pizza. Questions? Contact Melissa Rollins at <a href="mailto:mrollins@mr-online.com">mrollins@mr-online.com</a>.

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Ruth Circle Meeting – March 15

After a winter break, the Ruth Circle will resume their meetings on Wednesday, March 15th, at noon in Campbell Hall. We will start with lunch and everyone should bring a hot dish or salad to share. Bread, desserts and beverages will be provided. For the program, Deb Eaton will give a slide presentation on her travels to Ireland, England and France. You may remember Deb as the caretaker for Vera Coleman when she came to the Ruth Circle meetings.

Meet the new Executive Director of Rolling Ridge – March 16

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Meet Dr. Lawrence Jay, the new Executive Director of Rolling Ridge, our Conference Retreat Center in North Andover. While you're there enjoy the Andover Artists Guild Spring Art Show. Thursday, March 16, 3-7 p.m.



#### **FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNIES**

# **Sunday Morning Formation at 9:15 ADULTS**

#### **Living the Questions**

Living the Questions is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers. Each week the video presentations present conversational questions and insights from leading religious voices, all of which encourage curiosity and thinking outside of the usual lines of doctrine. Several of us worked through parts of this curriculum a few years ago and appreciated the fresh, progressive approach to the issues presented. Please join us as we consider some of the challenging questions for thoughtful Christians in the 21st century. We meet in the **Downstairs Library.** 

#### The Meaning of the Cross

Join us as we explore what the cross is all about, what it means, and doesn't mean, and how it can be a powerful symbol in our spiritual growth. In the **Downstairs classroom**, with Pastor Steve.

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Children & Junior High School

Our curriculum brings us to John's Gospel (**John 3:1–17**) this week as we explore with Nicodemus what it means to be "born again." There is a lot of mystery in this story and it takes place under the cover of darkness. What might we learn along with Nicodemus?

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### **Senior High Learning and Exploration**

The class meets **two** Sundays each month to respect the very busy schedules our teens keep! Our next meeting is **this Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.** We'll be talking about how our faith is lived outside church. The United Methodist Social Principles will offer a place to begin the discussion and activities.

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Thursday Women's Study Group - 9:30 -11:30

Our next meeting is this Thursday, **March 9th**, where we are revisiting, Madeline L'Engle's *The Irrational Season*, and continue discussing her Lenten chapter, *Lion and Lamb*. We welcome new voices in our on-going community. This is a wonderful time to try us out! PLEASE JOIN US! Let Lynne Osborn (gilyn1961@verizon.net) know of your interest.

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## Spiritual Life Retreat: Praying the Psalms March 31 – April 2



The Psalms don't seem very accessible or meaningful to a lot of people. But they're actually very rich poetry and a deep source for prayer. They are especially helpful when we face struggles and losses. On this retreat we'll learn about the psalms as vessels for prayer and explore some ways to pray with them. This is an opportunity to retreat from our usual routines and responsibilities for a time of prayer, reflection and deepening our relationship with God, the earth and one another. The retreat will be at Marie Joseph Center in Biddeford Pool, ME, Friday evening, March 31 – Sunday noon, April 2. The retreat house is on the ocean, with private rooms. Cost is \$170, but we will share the load with anyone for whom cost is a burden. You can sign up online or on the sign up bulletin board at church.

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Rolling Ridge Day Apart: God's Healing Touch - March 16

Our fast-paced society encourages us to forget who we are and whose we are. But we can actually experience God's peace in our daily lives. If we can surrender to the peace of God within, life becomes more manageable. Come for a day of prayer, blessing, meditation, self-compassion and learning to be rooted in God. We will experience God's peace within — "the peace that passes all understanding." Offered by Rolling Ridge, Thursday, March 16, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. For information click here.



REACHING OUT

Exploring Race – Workshop series, March 23 & 30, April 13

A local group called Fostering Racial Justice Group is offering a three-week series intended to give you a framework to understand race, bias, and the history of racism. Thursdays, 7 p.m. To sign up email the Fostering Racial Justice Group here.



CHURCH CALENDAR

Attached to this email you will find a copy of the church calendar for the month of March.

For the most up-to-date church calendar information, please go to the website, or click on the following link: http://www.saint-matthews.org/happenings/calendar. Here's how to find what you need:

From the HOME page, click on QUICK LINKS, then CALENDAR. To filter the type of events shown, click on the 'DOWN ARROW' to the right of the AGENDA tab at the top of the calendar. Following are the filters:

· Classes & Small Groups . Music Rehearsals . Outside Organizations' Events

· Committee Meetings . Worship . U.S. Holidays

· Events

Choose what you would like to see, then 'unclick' all the others. You should be able to see the calendar for as far out as it has been scheduled. If you want to see the location of an event, click on the individual event. We hope this is efficient for you.