



JOY in CHRIST Lutheran Church

110 Balboa Road
Hot Springs Village, AR 71909
501-915-9569

E-mail: office.cofjoy@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.community-of-joy.org

FEBRUARY 2025



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." (Luke 12:48)

There has been much joy here in the past couple of weeks as the congregation has extended a call for me to serve at Joy in Christ, which I accepted enthusiastically. For many of us, these decisions have fostered a sense of safety, security, and stability and have renewed our hopes for the future. We are celebrating these decisions and feeling called toward a newness of life together in the mission and ministry of this congregation.

The process that has brought us together, though, is less about "decision" and more about discerning God's will for you, God's will for me, and God's will for us together. At this moment in space and time I believe God has formed and equipped me specifically to be your pastor and God has developed and prepared you specifically for my leadership, service, and care. Our God has been good to give us to each other. Recognizing this new relationship we share is a gift from God leads me to wonder and to imagine how we might steward this gift faithfully.

The rest of the world is preparing to celebrate Valentine's Day this month. As I do my regular shopping, I am already seeing the heart-themed gifts, the large variety of flowers and balloons, and the holiday candy for sale. People are thinking about their relationships and considering how they will express love for one another on this special occasion. The observance of Valentine's Day is a celebration of relationships and an opportunity to give thanks to God for those relationships and for the love shared between people.

Using the words of Jesus in Luke's gospel, what is "required" or what is "demanded" for us to be good stewards of our relationships? Let's ponder these questions this month as we celebrate the wide variety of relationships we enjoy.

Love and peace to you,

Almost-Pastor Julie



Care Receivers Share How Their Stephen Ministers Made a Difference

My Stephen Minister was a consistent presence walking with me throughout my divorce. He would always show up, and most importantly, he refused to give up on me. I'll forever be grateful for the way he changed my life.
-Ralph

When I was with my Stephen Minister, I felt Jesus was with me. I saw the love of God in her eyes while we talked and prayed, and it would fill me with such comfort and peace. It helped me know that I could make it through.
-Ashley

After the death of my mom, I needed someone who would listen—even to the same stories over and over—and who wouldn't be afraid to say her name or bring up her memory. That's who my Stephen Minister was, and I don't know how I would have gotten through it without her.
-Molly



Troubled? One of Joy in Christ's trained Stephen Ministers may truly help. Please contact Stephen Leader Dorothy Fager 501/226-5215, or Stephen Leader Sue Maser 708/296-6692.

STEPHEN MINISTRY OF JOY IN CHRIST
CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE

Treasurers Report

	December <u>Actual</u>	December <u>Budget</u>	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>
Income	17,159	22,500	268,151	270,000
Expenses	<u>29,651</u>	<u>19,957</u>	<u>217,934</u>	<u>239,485</u>
Surplus	(12,492)	2,543	50,217	30,515
Cash on hand	598,627			
Liabilities	6,543			
Dedicated Funds	<u>457,384</u>			
Operating Capital	134,700			

The month of December ended with a deficit of \$12,492 for the month and a surplus of \$50,217 for the year. Income is slightly under budget and expenses are under budget for the year. The operating capital, cash less liabilities and dedicated funds, is \$134,700.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me.

John Keller, Treasurer



Read the Bible Together



Join us as we read through the bible in a year using the reading plan by BibleProject, which can be downloaded from the BibleProject website. Copies are also available in the office if desired.

We meet weekly on Thursdays at 10:00am to discuss what we've read the previous week and to reflect on how this regular spiritual practice of bible reading is enhancing our faith.

All are welcome to join in the conversation.

No commitment required.

Shoe Box Golf Scramble

Last summer, our Shoe Box Golf Scramble raised \$586 to fund our mission to support the high school students at both Mountain Pine and Jessieville High Schools. Those of you that participated should be proud of your efforts no matter what type of golf game you have! The Missions Team elected to supplement the scramble proceeds so as to create a \$600 grant to each school.

In December, Dick Coulson, Shoe Box Scramble Coordinator, Anne King, Missions Team, and Vicar Julie Wesley presented a \$600 check to Paden Ault, Jessieville Student Council Vice President. Also in attendance were Susan Martin, Student Councilor and Michael Spraggins, High School Principal. Paden explained that the Student Council will meet and make a determination as to how the grant should be spent to most benefit all of the high school students.



Jerry Fager, Joy in Christ Council President and Dick Coulson, worked with Lillian Alderman, Student Councilor at Mountain Pine High School to present them with another check for \$600. Mountain Pine High School puts the grant money toward their "Hygiene Closet" where a student can find shoes, articles of clothing, food, school supplies, medical or hygiene supplies, anything they need, no questions asked. The only rule: Take only what you need and will use.

Authorities from both schools thanked Joy in Christ for the support we provide to their student population. Some of these kids have limited resources and our Shoe Box Golf Scramble Grants help fill some of their needs.

As Scramble Coordinator, I thank all you golfers for supporting the program. You are doing God's work and having fun and fellowship while doing so. I look forward to seeing you out there on the links again this summer.

Dick Coulson



Reception of New Members

We are planning to receive new members into the congregation during worship on Saturday, February 22.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Julie.

Special thanks to the **Finance Committee** who provided refreshments before worship during the month of January.

In February the **Fellowship Committee** will be providing the goodies.





FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Lee & Mary Cordes February 7 (65 yrs.)
 Erwin & Beverly Hoeft February 13 (65 yrs.)

Glenn Kramer February 3
 Moonyean Smarzinski February 3
 Kathy Mielke February 11
 Peggy Farnsworth February 12
 Frank Palmquist February 12
 Christel Walker February 16
 Wanda Lassiter February 25
 Doris Harder February 26
 Marcia Underwood February 26



Thank you to the members of the **Call Committee:**

Steve Blankenship, Kim Long, Peter Mielke, Eileen Miller, Patty Ninke, Robin Pearson, & Nancy Wilkins.

Thank you to the members of the **Internship Committee:**

Pastor Deborah Halter, Alexis Funk, Anne King, Norm Knoke & Barb Woodman.

We couldn't have managed without you!



Evangelism CHALLENGE:

When you see something beautiful in someone, tell them.
 It may take you a second to say it, but for them, it could last a LIFETIME!

Just Curious...
 What is ONE THING that makes Joy in Christ's congregation unique?

JOY IN CHRIST COUNCIL MINUTES

You are welcome to read the minutes from each council meeting. On the church website click on:

COJ Documents/Reports.

You will be asked for a password (if you do not know the password, call the church office to get it).

Scroll down and all the minutes are listed for your viewing.





COMMUNICATIONS

At the January meeting of the church council, the council identified a need for better communication within the congregation and called upon Vice President Lynda Grasse to form a team in collaboration with the Business Services Committee to review and re-form the current practices of communication between the council, the committees, and the congregation. If you would like to join this group or give input/feedback about current communications, please contact Lynda. Be on the lookout for improved communications; it is important for everyone to be well-informed regarding the goings-on in the congregation!

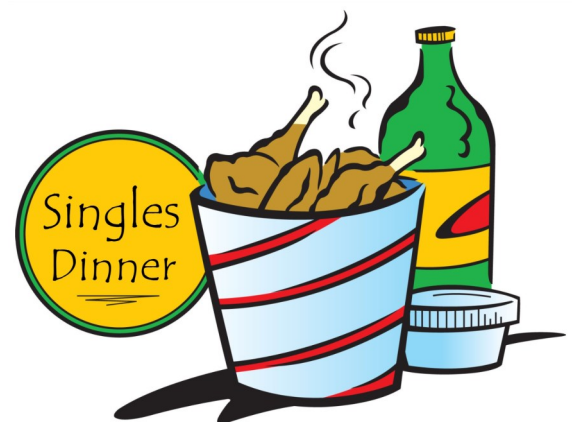
And speaking of communications:

Peter Mielke has worked tirelessly to restore the live-stream of our weekend worship services. This is an important offering of the church especially to those who are not able to be present to worship with us in person or those who would like to check us out before coming to visit for the first time. If you see Peter, please express some appreciation for his hard work on this valuable project!
Thank you, Peter!!

And one more thing about communications:

Have you "liked" the congregation's Facebook page yet? The newly reestablished live-stream worship services will appear on Facebook and the communications team is working on plans to make the Facebook page a more exciting, more engaging source of information and joy for you and for prospective members. You can find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/JiCLC.HSV

Singles Group for February 12, 2025....Hello there all you Singles. We missed almost all of you at our January outing. Of course, that horrible storm was on its way. However, I stood my ground and told Mother Nature to hold back until the five of us had finished our dining and giggling and sharing of worthy information. Of course, our church bunch won, and we were able to really have a lot of fun. We all decided that we would go to Sunset Grill for our next outing. So, get ready for Wednesday February 12 at 3 P.M. at Sunset Grill. I will be calling all of you.



By the grace of God and the call of the church

Julie Ann Wesley

will be Ordained into the
Ministry of Word and Sacrament
and Installed as pastor at
Joy in Christ Lutheran Church



February 15, 2025 at 1pm

Your presence and prayers are requested

The color of the day is red.
Clergy are invited to vest and process.

110 Balboa Rd.
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Ordination and Installation of our new pastor

Vicar Julie will be ordained and installed as our new pastor on Saturday, February 15, 2025 at 1:00pm. Bishop Becca Middeke-Conlin will be preaching and presiding. The Fellowship Committee is making arrangements for sandwiches and cake to follow the service.

On that Saturday, there will be no worship at 5:00pm. Worship on Sunday, February 16 will be a short, in-seat service with no music.



**MEN'S
FELLOWSHIP**



ATTENTION ALL MEN OF JOY IN CHRIST

Let's get a group together once or twice monthly – maybe an evening? – to gather somewhere local for pizza and adult beverages. We'll relax and shoot the breeze, an informal guys' night out.

Who's in?

Contact Jerry Fager; we'll make a plan to suit as many as possible.

jdfager@yahoo.com 501-226-5215

SHARING AND CARING GROUPS

What is this and Why are We Doing it?

The evangelism team worked with Fellowship Committee to reimagine a small group ministry much like the previous successful program at both Christ Lutheran and Community of Joy.

Relationships to others is a significant factor in the development and growth of our faith. It is important for your own formation and it is important for the faith formation of others that you have and maintain relationships where faith can be shared, discussed and experienced together. In this way we can build one another up (Thessalonians 5:11) and bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

How can this work?

Evangelism and Fellowship have strategically divided the congregation into small groups and selected a leader for each group.

The committees imagine that these small groups will meet once a month for a year. That "meeting" can be any type of gathering that can be imagined.

Some suggested activities are:

- Share a meal together (at a home or restaurant)
- Plan an outing/field trip
- Have a game day
- Schedule a "workday" at church
- Gather to learn a new hobby
- Start a book club
- Develop a service project to work together



The goal set by the Evangelism and Fellowship committees is to simply become acquainted with each other and better establish trusting relationships.

Joy in Christ Ribbon Cutting

Check your calendar.

Are you available on Thursday, February 6 at 11:30?

The Hot Springs Village Chamber of Commerce will be at Joy in Christ to do a ribbon cutting.

This will be a celebration and announcement of the change of our name to Joy in Christ. This is a community event with members from the Chamber in attendance and residents from the Village.



Come and join us on Thursday, February 6 at 11:30. Refreshments will be served after the ribbon cutting.



Greetings to all the Women of Joy!

What a delightful meeting we had last month! After a brief business session, Karen Sterzik guided us through our blanket-tying service project. Those in attendance enjoyed delicious food prepared and served by Dianne, finding the experience both therapeutic and a wonderful opportunity to connect with one another. The completed blankets were blessed during the January 26th service and later distributed to those in need through Love Lunches. A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who participated!

So, what does February bring? The much-anticipated Antique Road Show, hosted by Shaun Limozaine and Jill Fitzgerald! Many of us have family treasures passed down through generations, wonder what they might be worth? To assist Shaun in her research and preparations, please photograph your item(s) and email them to her at shaun.limozaine@me.com along with a brief description of the item. During the event, we'll share our treasures and learn more about their history and value.

Additionally, we invite you to consider taking on a leadership role within our WOJ group. Are you seeking an opportunity to serve? Reach out to Melanie or Dianne to learn more about the responsibilities of the president and vice-president roles. We're thrilled that Sue Fisher has agreed to serve one more year as treasurer, and Christine Lagerquist will continue as secretary for another year.

I hope you will join us at our next meeting, which is on Tuesday, February 18th at 9 am in the church narthex. Let's keep nurturing our connections, fortifying our faith, and cherishing the special bond we share as Women of Joy."

In Joy,
Melanie

Lutheran Disaster Response

The Evangelism and Missions Teams discussed the recent California Fires at our recent committee meeting and decided to ask the congregation to consider donating financially to Lutheran Disaster Response during the month of February.

The Evangelism/Missions Team will match the funds you donate through the congregation, up to \$2000. If you would like to make a donation to give assistance to those affected by the wildfires, please use the SPECIAL OFFERINGS envelope located in the pocket on the back of the sanctuary chairs, write "LDR" on the memo line of your check made out to "Community of Joy," and place in the offering plate during worship or mail into the office.

More information directly from Lutheran Disaster Response:

The Situation:

Multiple wildfires have broken out across Los Angeles County in California, with tens of thousands of people under evacuation orders. Sparked by dry conditions, strong winds and a limited water supply, these fires have destroyed homes and businesses and have led to injuries and loss of life. News is still unfolding about the full impact as firefighting efforts continue.

Our Response:

Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating with the Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod and other partners to assess the needs of people impacted by the wildfires. We will work with them to provide for immediate needs and recovery amid the widespread destruction. Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to accompanying recovering communities for months and years to come.

What you can do:

Pray:

Please pray for communities in California impacted by the wildfires. May God's healing presence bring them peace and hope in their time of need and give strength to those working diligently to contain the fires and care for affected communities.

Give:

Your gifts to [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) equip us to respond to communities affected by wildfires and related disasters. These gifts also empower us to respond to disasters whenever and wherever they strike. Gifts to "[U.S. Wildfires](#)" will be used in full (100%) to assist those affected by wildfires until the response is complete.

To give by phone, call **800-638-3522**.

Checks or money orders can be mailed to:

Lutheran Disaster Response

P.O. Box 1809

Merrifield, VA 22116-8009





FEBRUARY 2025

Office Hours
Tues, Wed, Thurs, Friday
10:00 - 2:00
501-915-9569

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1 3 C/S (Sandy Knoke) 4:30 pm Hospitality 5 pm Worship
2 8:30 am Hospitality 9 am Worship	3 12:30-3:30pm Mahjong 2pm SCAT 3pm Property	4 1 pm Lake Forest Worship 3:30 Revelation Bible Study	5 11 am Prayers of the People 1pm Aging with Grace	6 10 am BibleProject 11:30 Ribbon Cutting	7	8 4:30 pm Hospitality 5 pm Worship
9 8:30 am Hospitality 9 am Worship	10 12:30-3:30 pm Mahjong	11 9am Council 1 pm Fellowship 3:30 Revelation Bible Study	12 11 am Prayers of the People 3pm Singles Dinner Sunset Grill	13 10 am BibleProject	14	15 1:00 pm Julies Installation & Ordination Reception Following (No 5pm SVC)
16 9 am Short in-seat Service	17 9am Focus 12:30-3:30 pm Mahjong	18 9am Women of Joy 3:30 Revelation Bible Study	19 11 am Prayers of the People	20 9 am Hymn Planning 10 am BibleProject 1pm Worship & Music	21 Newsletter Articles Due	22 4:30 pm Hospitality 5 pm Worship
23 8:30 am Hospitality 9 am Worship	24 12:30-3:30 pm Mahjong	25 8am Men's Breakfast 3:30 Revelation Bible Study	26 11 am Prayers of the People 1pm Group 9 Caring & Sharing	27 10 am BibleProject 1pm E-Team & Missions @ Lake Forest	28	

