



Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church

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February 28, 2025

Dear Members, Former Members and Charter Members,

Spirit of Joy enjoyed the visit from Pastor Bruce Lerum and his family December 7th and 8th. He shared his history as well as providing the sermon and helped Pastor Sharon with communion. Pastor Sharon made all Christmas services special. In January we welcomed three new members. On the Sunday of the chili cook-off we also held a blessed send off for Pastor Sharon and Patrick as Pastor retired. Many stories of appreciation told of Pastor's leading us through parking lot, courtyard and sanctuary services as we struggled through the COVID pandemic. Pastor's technical talents, Patrick's painting skills, placing signs on Hwy 89A and their friendships we have shared will definitely be missed. Also, her regular duties of visiting the sick and homebound, church services, and attending meetings were special for SOJ. Starting the first part of February, Pastor Conrad Braaten, resident of Sedona and member of Christ Lutheran, Sedona has committed to service as Interim Pastor for six months.

Part of upcoming 30th Celebration events planned thus far include the following former Pastors' visits:

- Pastor Bob Jones is scheduled February 23. He will share his LAMA (Lutheran AZ Ministry Advocacy) experience with the AZ State Legislature.
- Former Interim Pastors Stephanie Johnson and Jennifer Zahnow find their busy schedules prevent them from joining us.
- Pastor Mari Larson is in transition to the senior pastorate at St. Andrews in Las Vegas. She is excited about being here on a date to be announced in the summertime!
- Mrs. Lauren Mudro Petersen, wife of former Interim Pastor Ed Petersen, plans to attend the culmination service or thereafter.

The following themes and focus ministries include:

- February—Breaking Ground, focus: VVHC meal and NELM needs including water purification. Yearly Science & Religion Series has scheduled four interesting speakers each Sunday afternoon of the month
- March—Joy and Gratitude, focus: Stand with Refugees. Our Celtic Sunday corned beef and cabbage potluck is scheduled
- April—Spirit of Growth, focus: the 30th Anniversary Celebration and Breakfast Bunch, Promoting the Annual Fall School Shoe Drive

We ask you to keep us in prayer and we heartily invite your attendance during this celebration time for Spirit of Joy. We also ask prayers as we seek a Shepherd to lead us. Remember our Culmination Celebration Service and Brunch on April 27, 2025. Another update to this email will remind you as the celebration nears. Contact us if you wish to purchase one or more of the commemorative cups.

As Spirit of Joy looks to the future, we ask 'May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!' (Psalm 29:11)

SOJ's In-Reach/Outreach Team
Interim Pastor Conrad Braaten

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America