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## “Preparing to Call a new Pastor”



Dear Members of Spirit of Joy,

I hope this message finds all of you well! It continues to be a joyful privilege to work with your leadership in preparing our congregation to enter a **call process for a new full-time pastor**. Given the rhythms of congregational life, we are working step by step to position ourselves to partner with the bishop's office of the Grand Canyon Synod in a call process.

**One of the pivotal factors, of course, is that of our congregational financial picture.** Simply put, that means demonstrating to ourselves, and the Synod, that we will be able to financially support a full-time pastor. This is an important goal to achieve as we prepare for the budget year 2026.

I have asked to be paid on a minimal basis as your Interim Pastor so that our congregation can begin to build the financial resources this year that will be needed for initial expenses of the call process. However, **the challenge to achieve and sustain a budget that includes a full-time pastor begins now.** It begins with each one of us looking at our personal stewardship with the question: Can I/we do more to support the life, work and mission of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church?

There is no “one size fits all” response to this question. I have always believed that **our response is something we bring to our Lord in prayer**, asking the Spirit to guide our thoughts, our conscience, and our willingness to do our part. If we believe that Spirit has already prepared the future for the congregation of Spirit of Joy to walk in, we also need to believe that Spirit has cultivated and equipped us to make that future possible. As a great hymn encourages, “*Take it to the Lord in prayer.*” Stewardship is business with the Lord.

In the coming months your Council, and a newly established **Financial Task Group**, will present information that will help you understand where we are now as a congregation, and where we need to be as we enter the call process. I thank them for their work and willingness to share this financial picture with you, and I thank each one of you for your wonderful support of Spirit of Joy in the past. Now, have work to do – in a Spirit of Joy!

In Peace,

Pastor Braaten



Bill Taylor	1
Bob Dickson	2
Connie Harms	5
Linnea Simpson	8
Becky Keck	9
Mike Piotrowski	18
Bruce Swenson	21
Kristi Alley	28

*If your special day is missing from our list, please call or email the church office to let us know.*



Anderson, Roger & Marilyn	1
Mathe, Lisa & Joe	2
Piotrowski, Mike & Barb	5
Swenson, Doug & Anita	6
Graham, Paul & Jan	10
Keck, Jeff & Becky	13
Parkinson, Marie & Sturm, Richard	16
Alley, Rich & Kristi	17
Suhr, Ken & Dee	17
Dunn, Roger & Rita	18
Swenson, Marlene & Bruce	29

## Deaths

Please pray for the families of these members and former members who have passed into eternal life:

Marilyn Howisey, Nancy Sowarby,  
Carolyn Ward, George Wells

## REWARD PROGRAM

Spirit of Joy is the recipient of donations from the Fry's Community Rewards program. You do nothing, other than register, and a percentage of your purchases will be sent to Spirit of Joy to be used by the Altar Guild. Call the office for more details on enrolling.



# Spirit of Joy LUTHERAN CHURCH

330 Scenic Drive  
Clarkdale, Arizona 86324  
928-634-4102

Rev. Conrad Braaten  
Interim Pastor  
prbraaten@gmail.com

Rosie West, Office Manager  
officesoj@sojaz.net

Website:  
www.sojaz.net

Send prayer requests to:  
prayer@sojaz.net

Visit us at:  
www.facebook.com/sojaz

## Communion Ministry



Please see Pastor or Bob Dickson if you are interested in taking communion and/or visiting with homebound members.

## Pastor Braaten's Summer Schedule

Usually, Jennifer and I go east to Virginia, North Carolina and Florida for four months during the summer to be with our two children and their families. This year we are cutting that time in half, so I will only be away this summer during July and August. As a result of our Covenant with Christ Lutheran Church, Pastor David Brandfass and Pastor Julie Gerrish will be filling in for me. They are doing a six-week series in July on **"Revelation for Our Times"** at Christ Lutheran and will be sharing that series with us at Spirit of Joy beginning July 6th. Naomi Barcanic and Tom Berlage will be filling in the last two Sundays in August. You will be able to hear the sermons preached by Pastors Brandfass and Gerrish by going to the Christ Lutheran Website the following Sunday: [christsedona.org](http://christsedona.org). I hope you do – this sermon series in July/August sounds like it will be really interesting. I'll be tuning in myself!

During my time away I'll be working from afar to help us get ready for parish activities beginning in September. If you are away or will be traveling this summer – be safe, and may Spirit be with us together again as the leaves begin to fall in September. Pr. B.



### CHOIR REHEARSAL TIME CHANGE

9:00am –Choir Rehearsal

9:15am—Hymn Sing

11:00am—Choir Rehearsal

## SUMMER DAY CAMP for Youth K – 6th grade is Coming!

Christ Lutheran Church is hosting a **Summer Day Camp** from June 23 – 27 at their campus south of Sedona. Pastor Julie has extended a personal invitation to the youth of Spirit of Joy (and friends?!) to participate in this camp, which runs from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm every day, and includes lunch! The cost is \$20.00 per youth. (We can provide scholarships if needed). We are looking for an SOJ facilitator for our participation. Please contact Pastor Braaten for more details. What a great opportunity for our youth to participate in a professionally run Summer Day Camp – it's called "WRAPPED IN MYSTERY!"



**For Grades K-5**

**Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am—3:00 pm,**

**Friday 9:00am—Noon**

**(childcare available through 5pm for working families)**

**Christ Lutheran Church - Sedona**  
**Campamento de Verano 2025!**  
**Summer Day Camp 2025!**

### WRAPPED IN MYSTERY

Day Camp 2025 Week at a Glance

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<b>WHO</b> ?	<b>WHAT</b> ?	<b>WHERE</b> ?	<b>HOW</b> ?	<b>WHY</b> ?
Who is our neighbor?	What is God's kingdom like?	Where will you get this living water?	How are we going to feed all these people?	Why does Jesus welcome sinners and eat with them?
The Good Samaritan	The Sower	Woman at the Well	Jesus Feeds 5,000	The Lost Sheep and Lost Coin

Stories found in the Sparks Story Bible

## *Greetings from the Grahams!*

Dear friends at SOJ,

We're doing well—except for Paul. A fall in the shower led to a trip to the emergency room. He is healing—thank the Lord. I'm doing OK.

We enjoy our scenery and fellow residents. A beautiful Mother's Day Brunch with classical guitar!

Take care and God Bless!

Love,  
Jan

Paul and Jan Graham  
200 Iris Canyon Rd. #305  
Monterey, CA 93940



## SUMMER BREAKS

The following groups will be taking a hiatus during the summer months. See you in September!

- ◆ Daytime Book Group
- ◆ Gather Bible Study
- ◆ Men's Morning Group
- ◆ WELCA will not have their regularly scheduled meeting during the summer months but will meet informally for breakfast at Denny's, same day and time.



Non-perishable food items will be collected this weekend, June 1st for our local food bank. Leave your food items in the grocery cart in the narthex.  
(Please remember to check the expiration dates on food before donating.)

If you participate in the Green Bag Program, this is the time to bring in your



## *Out-to-* **LUNCH** Bunch

The Out to Lunch Bunch meets at Noon on the first Sunday of every month (June 1st, July 6th, etc) with the restaurant TBD.

Please call the office at 928-634-4102 by Noon on the Friday before to reserve your seat at the table. All are invited!

## CAMPFORMATION 2025

**LEGENDS**  
**PHILIPPIANS 4:13**

CAMP PINEROCK PRESCOTT  
JUNE 30-JULY 4



PRAYER VIGIL

We are five weeks away from the start of Campformation 2025 in Prescott.

The Grand Canyon Synod wishes to support Campformation and one of the best ways is through prayer for our campers, counselors, and staff.

Please join in this effort to pray for all those involved by using the QR code above.

## FOOD BANK & GREEN BAG SUNDAY!



### CELEBRATION OF LIFE OF CAROLYN WARD

There will be a Celebration of Life of Carolyn Ward on Saturday, June 7th at 11am followed by inurnment in the columbarium next to her husband, Norm. The family invites all to a reception in the fellowship hall following the service served by WELCA.



# Stewardship — Time, Talent, & Treasure

## Collection Counting Teams

Help! Counter teams are needed to count and deposit the weekly collection. Currently there are two 2-person teams counting the Sunday collection and additional teams would lighten the load. Team members must be trustworthy and cannot be from the same family. Counting takes about an hour, the procedure is easy to follow, and generally counting is done on either Sunday after worship or Monday. Are you interested in helping? Join us for an informational meeting after service on June 8<sup>th</sup> in Bible Study 1.

## Altar Guild

Many hands make light work as SOJ strives to create an Altar Guild of 4-6 teams.

Altar Guild members set up communion for services, clean up after services, and care for the candles and altar linens. A procedural manual is in progress, hopefully to be completed by mid-June, followed by an informational meeting and training session.



*A father is neither an anchor to hold us back, nor a sail to take us there,  
but a guiding light whose love shows us the way.*

**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!**

## DAYTIME BOOK CLUB

The Daytime Book Club will not be meeting in June and July. The list below is for possible discussions in the fall. If not already a participant, join this lively group in the fall. Watch the August newsletter for a book choice and time of meeting.



1. ***The Frozen River***, Ariel Lawhon, YLN—Audio on CD, Regular and large print, ebook, Kindle, playaway
2. ***The Magic Hour***, Kristin Hannah, YLN Regular and Large Print, Audiobook on CD, ebook, Kindle
3. ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime***, Mark Haddon, YLN—Reg Print, e-audio book, ebook, Kindle, Audio book on CD
4. ***James***, Perceval Everett—YLN Reg & Large Print, e-book, Kindle, playaway
5. ***Beyond Tuesday Morning***, Karen Kingsbury, YLN, Reg Print, e-book and Kindle
6. ***Flying Angels***, Danielle Steel, YLN, Reg, Lrg Prn, e-book
7. ***When We Meet Again***, Kristin Harmel, YLN Reg Print
8. ***Notorious RGB: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsberg***, Irwin Carmon, YLN copies: Regular Print, e-audio, e-audio on CD

## Joy Pack Ministry



The last packing for the 2024-2025 school year was on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers packed and delivered 1,800 weekend bags during the school year for food challenged K-4<sup>th</sup> grade students in three local schools: Clarkdale Jerome School, Cottonwood Oak Creek's Cornville campus and Dr. Daniel Bright. These students look forward to receiving their bag each week.

THANK YOU to everyone for supporting this ministry—the volunteers who packed and delivered the bags each week and helped with the bi-monthly Green Bag collection events and the many members and friends who support this ministry through food donations, financial support, and sponsoring Thrivent Action Teams. Thanks to your generosity the average cost was \$6.00 per bag.

SPECIAL NOTE: On May 27th, Arizona Community Foundation of Yavapai County awarded SOJ a \$1,926 grant for our Joy Pack program!

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELP MAKE THIS PROGRAM A SUCCESS!!**

*God's Work, Our Hands helping feed the food challenged children in our community.*

### SPIRIT OF JOY'S "TO DO" LIST

Did you know that SOJ has a "to do" list that anyone can help with?

Here are a few items around our campus that need attention on a regular basis.

Perhaps you can help cross an item off of this list. See a council member if you can help out.



God's Work  
Our Hands

- ◆ Assembling a tool kit for the office.
- ◆ Cleaning of the patio before worship (leaves, bird droppings, etc.).
- ◆ Taking apart the gate locks and lubricating them.
- ◆ Clean floor drains in the kitchen (1st of the month)
- ◆ Clean filters in the dishwasher (1st of the month)

### CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY—MAY

The Council met May 21 at 1 pm. We presented a motion to officially approve our 12 new members since October. As a reminder to us all, those names are: Robert Dickson, Kristen McGrew, Mark Goodwin, Nancy Sowarby, Barbara Piotrowski, Mike Piotrowski, Kellie Sanders, Georganne Eibe, Hal Hatfield, Ronda Hatfield, Ann Torruellas, Elizabeth Valenzuela. Welcome!! In addition to our monthly reports, we had the honor of Pastor Braatan's training on the Council's role in leadership especially preparing for the formation of a new call committee.



Pam Moody  
Council Secretary

## WELCA NEWS—May 2025



The May 8th meeting of WELCA was called to order by Becky K with 14 members present. Becky had us pick chenille straws and shape them into three important things in our lives. Pr. Conrad share with us his shapes as did everyone else.

- Deanna led devotions and a reading in addition to a prayer from Pope Francis.
- Loma signed WELCA up for breakfasts at Denny's at 9:30am during the summer months. Loma will pick up donuts, cheese and crackers for Sunday fellowship during the summer. She will also order a cake for Mother's Day on May 11th.
- The fellowship sign-up sheet was passed around for the remaining Sundays in May.
- Loma gave the treasurer's report. A donation is coming from the Verde Valley Voices as Loma & Mell'O'Dee helped with their potluck on May 6th.
- The secretary's report was read. Loma made the motion to accept the minutes & it was seconded by Glena. Motion carried.
- Special thanks to Sue B for hosting the Spring Brunch with Wendy helping to set up. It was suggested that in the future WELCA supply the brunch food with Sue doing no cooking. All agreed.
- Special thanks to Judy H for all her hard work the past few years to make out 30th Anniversary celebration a success. Also thanks to Georgia for leading the program and everyone else's help.
- Laura shared her good news from her doctor's visit. She is cancer free! Thank you Lord!
- A special "goodbye" to our snowbirds. Carol S. texted that she arrived home safe.
- Becky K shared the singing of the "Irish Blessing".
- Cindy H showed us "To Go Bag" and a list of things you need to put in it if you have to leave your home because of a disaster. Also included was a fire blanket for use in the home.
- Sue B shared that the Quail Country Quilters will have a quilt show at SOJ on Friday, Oct 17, 9-4, and Saturday, Oct 18, 9-2:30. WELCA will be serving coffee and goodies for breakfast for \$5 and the \$10 lunch will include chicken salad/croissants, cold sandwiches of meat and cheese, chips and apples. This will have to be approved by the health department and servers must have current food handler's certification on file in-house and wear gloves.
- On July 6th, we will be serving pancakes and sausage for fellowship. More info to come from Loma and Cindy.
- Sue stated that the carpet in the fellowship hall needs to be cleaned at a cost of \$300. Dee made the motion to have it cleaned, seconded by Marlene and motion carried. July 8th was the date chosen to get it done.
- Christ Lutheran Church in Sedona would like to have a WELCA retreat with SOJ. A date will be discussed with Pr. Julie at CLC.
- Marie reported that we will have a Pie Day on Father's Day, June 15th.
- Joyful Crafters need help cutting fabric pieces and tying quilts on Fridays at 9am. Everyone is welcome.
- Bill T. updated us on the chair replacement project. We need approx. 130 chairs at \$53 each. Loma made a motion to help with \$5000, seconded by Sue and carried. It was suggested we have a fund raiser or each member adopt a chair to help cover the costs.
- Rosie needs help on Friday, May 23rd, and Marlene volunteered.
- Old Town Mission is starting their Back to School program now with a list of much needed supplies.

Prayer requests were taken and we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Mell'O'Dee Gaber

# Back to School Shoe Drive

This year marks Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual "Back to School Shoe Drive!" This event will take place during the first two weeks of July 2025. The goal is to collect NEW shoes to assist K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students in our community who cannot afford proper shoes for school. Last year, we collected over 100 pairs of shoes! Our aim is to meet or exceed last year's success.

*Please consider sharing our "Back to School Shoe Drive" with neighbors and friends. It's easy. Check out the display table in the narthex after July 1st, pick a shoe size, purchase a pair of shoes, and bring them to the church by July 15<sup>th</sup>. OR...donate money directly to the program and our shoppers will buy the sizes most needed. The more shoes we purchase, the more students we help!!!*

The shoes will be blessed before they are dispersed to Clarkdale-Jerome and Cottonwood Schools' nurses in August so they can give them to the children in need. It is an incredible way to "kick off" the school year!

Sizes that we need are:

Girls - 10 Children, 11C, 12C, 13C, 1 Youth, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y, 5Y, 6Y

Boys - 10 Children, 11C, 12C, 13C, 1 Youth, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y, 5Y, 6Y

Thank you, for helping us spread joy and shoes to the children in our community!



## A FRIENDLY CHOIR REMINDER

Please...no perfume near the choir (some have severe allergies). The front three rows of chairs are designated to be scent free. Thank you!

## WORSHIP SCRIPTURE READINGS



June 1: Acts 16:16-34; Ps 97; Rev 22:12-14, 16-17,20-21, John 17:20-26  
June 8: Acts 2:1-21; Ps 104:24-34, 35b; Romans 8:14-17; John 14:8-17 [25-27]  
June 15: Prov 8:1-4, 22-31; Ps 8; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15  
June 22: Isa 65:1-9; Ps 22:19-28; Gal 3:23-29; Luke 8:26-39  
June 29: Acts 12:1-11; Ps 87:1-3, 5-7; 2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18; John 21:15-19

## 2025 SPIRIT OF JOY CHURCH COUNCIL

### Officers

**Kellie Sanders—President**  
ksanders0410@gmail.com, 815-751-1133

**Laura Stransky—Vice President**  
klstransky@gmail.com; 970-749-2270

**Pam Moody—Secretary**  
SOJCCPAM@gmail.com, 802-503-2598

**Rich Alley**  
norgerich@aol.com; 928-713-2961

### Liaisons

**Bill Taylor—Property**  
j\_and\_btay@outlook.com;  
928-202-3337 (h); 928-274-1321 (c)

**Mick Shanahan—Faith Formation**  
mobilrrtaz@gmail.com, 402-679-7990

**Sue Bro—In-Reach/Outreach**  
npsbro@outlook.com, 928-254-7029

### Ex Officio

**Pr. Conrad Braaten**  
prbraaten@gmail.com, 202-213-4235



## FINANCIAL REPORT—April 2025

### Operating Fund—April

Operating Fund Income	Operating Fund Expenses	Net Income
\$ 21,689.02	\$ 11,791.61	\$ 9,897.41

### Year-to-Date (Jan-Apr)

Operating Fund Income	Operating Fund Expenses	Net Income
\$ 78,012.24*	\$ 48,292.77	\$ 29,719.47

\*Fundraising Income \$ 775.95  
Youth \$460.00

### 4/30/2025 Ending Balance

General Fund	105,989.99
Mortgage Fund	4,050.93
Restricted Ministries	<u>16,584.87</u>
Ending Balance	\$126,625.79

### Board Restricted Fund—April

Board Restricted Income	Board Restricted Expenses	Net Income
\$ 109.00	\$ 3,265.00	\$ (3,156.00)

### Year-to-Date (Jan-Apr)

Board Restricted Income	Board Restricted Expenses	Net Income
\$ 622.00*	\$ 15,510.73**	\$ (14,888.73)

\*Thrivent Choice Dollars \$ 622.00

\*\*Youth Camp Fee \$250.00  
Piano Tuning \$700.00  
Building HVAC \$9,145.73  
Parking Lot \$5,415.00

### 3/31/2025 Ending Balance

Building Fund	\$ 0.00
Landscaping Fund	1,911.02
Mortgage Principal	1,534.00
Organ/Piano Fund	2,300.87
Restricted Designated	2,290.70
Restricted Undesignated	<u>11,197.06</u>
	\$ 19,233.65
Bank 11 month CD	\$ 10,000.00
Mission Investment Fund Savings Balance	\$ 2,422.17
Mission Investment Fund Mortgage Owed	\$120,646.53

## QUARTERLY STATEMENTS

In an effort to save on printing costs, quarterly contribution statements are now being printed or emailed on-demand.

If you would like to receive your latest statement of giving, please contact Rosie in the office.

## MEMORIALS, HONORS AND GIFTS

**May 2025**

### JOY PACKS

Anita Young

### IN MEMORY OF

Carolyn Ward from Lucy Acheson  
George Wells from Kip & Laura Stransky

**IN HUGE APPRECIATION  
for Judy & Russ Haslow  
for leading the  
30th Anniversary Celebration!**

Kip and Laura Stransky

## Recurring Offerings

Want to give a recurring offering to SOJ without writing a check every time? Most banks have a free “bill pay” feature that you can utilize to have a check mailed directly to SOJ or directly deposited. Contact your bank for more information.

# Spirit of Joy LUTHERAN CHURCH

330 Scenic Drive  
Clarkdale, Arizona 86324  
www.sojaz.net

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## Pentecost is June 8th.

*Wear red to worship in celebration of the  
Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Christian Church.*



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### June Highlights

- 1—Food Bank Sunday  
Out to Lunch Bunch, Noon
- 4—In-Reach/Outreach Team Mtg (CR), 10am
- 5—Men's Group @ Red Rooster Café, 8am
- 12—WELCA Meeting, 9:30am at Denny's
- 12-13—Grand Canyon Synod Assembly in Las Vegas
- 14—Green Bag Food Event, Mtn View UMC, 10am
- 15—Father's Day w/ Pie Sunday during Fellowship
- 18—Church Council Mtg (CR), 1pm
- 19—Men's Group at Red Rooster Café, 8:00am

### ANNUAL FATHER'S DAY PIE SUNDAY

WELCA will be serving pie during fellowship on Sunday, June 15th, in appreciation for all men on Father's Day.

### SOJ Weekly Worship Schedule

Mid-Week Worship—  
Wednesdays 5pm

Sunday Worship—9:30am  
Fellowship—following Sunday worship