



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

I hope all of the People of Spirit of Joy are well. You are kept in prayer. I'm sure that you are enjoying the worship leadership and insightful preaching being provided by Pastor David Brandfass and Pastor Julie Gerrish. What a meaningful way to experience the spiritual Covenant we have as a congregation with Christ Lutheran Church in Sedona. Listening to the Book of Revelation is so important these days, and they are doing such a wonderful job of opening ("Unveiling"!) it to you (I'm listening to their sermons on the Christ Lutheran website each week!)

Jennifer and I are doing well in Virginia, where we are assisting our son in a transition of his practice as an Osteopathic Internist in North Carolina. This means babysitting two corgis and doing some home repairs. Already my mind is with you in anticipation of our work together beginning in September (I got the word that your Council has officially asked me to continue as your Interim Pastor for a while longer!).

In anticipation of the "Fall Semester", a half-dozen Spirit of Joy members have conspired to challenge our congregation to be a "*learning community*" as we await the calling of our new pastor. When St. Paul writes to his young congregation in Colossae he doesn't emphasize their worship and praise (however important those are), but prioritizes their spiritual growth, saying "*(I) have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God...*"

Folks – we don't do this without being intentional: reading the scriptures, praying for discernment, listening to one another, and wrestling with our understanding of what the Holy Spirit has prepared for us to walk in. Martin Luther would say that we won't go anywhere without putting into play the scriptures, our critical reasoning, and our "inner forum" – our conscience. How much of this is you? To put this into practice within the community of Joy is to become a "Learning Community."

I hope with all my heart that each one of you will take the invitation to be a part of the "Learning Community" seriously. With everything to gain, we have nothing to lose.

Pastor Braaten



Lillia Simpson	2
Reuben Magdaleno	4
Pam Moody	10
Kristen McGrew	13
Laura Stransky	13
Barbara Canaguier	15
Marie Parkinson	23
Robyn Magdaleno	31

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

Converse, James & Claudia	5
Atkins, Thomas & Glenalee	8
Knutson, David & Sandy	15



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, Yona Ash

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.

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

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Rev. Conrad Braaten
Interim Pastor
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Rosie West, Office Manager
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Send prayer requests to:
prayer@sojaz.net

Visit us at:
www.facebook.com/sojaz

Communion Ministry

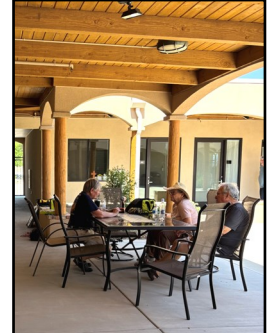


Please see Bob Dickson if you are interested in taking communion and/or visiting with homebound members.

NEW CHAIRS ARE IN PLACE!

Thank you to all involved!

The church council would like to thank all of those who helped with figuring out finances, putting our sanctuary chairs together, and moving them into their final places. Here are those who assisted in this large endeavor: Mary Stelpstra, Bill Taylor, Mick Shanahan, Bob Dickson, Hal and Ronda Hatfield, Mark Goodwin, Micah Swenson, Kim Densmore and son, Chance, Fred Huff, and Ann Torruellas. If we missed anyone in this “thank you” please let Kellie Sanders know and we will recognize them next month with a thank you!



DAYTIME BOOK CLUB

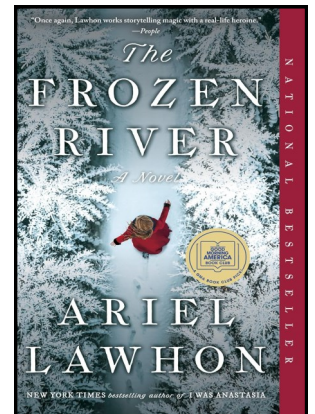
Title: **The Frozen River Synopsis**

Author: **Ariel Lawhon**

ISBN-13: 978-0593312070 448 pages

Summary:

A historical fiction novel set in Hallowell, Maine, in 1789. The story centers around Martha Ballard, a midwife and healer, who investigates the death of a man found frozen in the Kennebec River. The discovery occurs during a harsh winter, and Martha's examination of the body suggests foul play, contradicting the initial assessment of an accident. As Martha delves deeper, she uncovers a connection to a prior alleged rape involving the deceased and another prominent town figure, Judge North, which adds another layer of intrigue and social tension. Martha's investigation, documented in her detailed diary entries, intertwines with the unfolding legal proceedings and reveals the complexities of justice and social dynamics in a patriarchal society. She faces challenges in seeking justice for the victim of the alleged rape, as well as for herself as a woman with limited legal rights. The novel explores themes of female empowerment, social injustice, and the power of truth in the face of societal pressures. Ultimately, Martha's pursuit of truth leads to a resolution that has far-reaching consequences for herself and the community.



Avid readers, this book is available at YLN in the following formats: Audio CD, regular and large print, eBook, Kindle & Playaway. I just finished reading this novel. I purchased the book because the list to get it through YLN was long. I will share with anyone once I get home sometime after August 15th. Contact me if you want my copy. We'll meet on August 28 at 2:00 pm, in the Conference Room.

WORSHIP SCRIPTURE READINGS



Aug 3: Eccles 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23; Psalm 49:1-12; Luke 12:13-21; Revelation 7:1-17
Aug 10: Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22; Luke 12:32-40; Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27, 22:1-5
Aug 17: Jeremiah 23:23-29; Psalm 82; Luke 12:49-56
Aug 24: Isaiah 58:9b-14; Psalm 103:1-8; Luke 13:10-17
Aug 31: Proverbs 25:6-7a; Psalm 112; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Why Go To Church?

A Church-goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

"I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."



This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!" When you are DOWN to nothing...God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!"

Submitted by Laura Stransky

2025 SPIRIT OF JOY CHURCH COUNCIL

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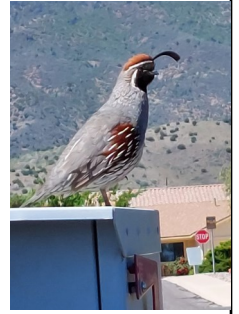
Ex Officio
Pr. Conrad Braaten
prbraaten@gmail.com, 202-213-4235



SOJ has it's own Mail Quail!

Our male, mail quail is anxiously awaiting our next mail delivery!

What a beauty he is!



FOOD BANK & GREEN BAG SUNDAY!



Non-perishable food items will be collected this weekend, August 3rd, for our local food bank. Leave your food items in the grocery cart in the narthex. If you participate in the Green Bag program, please bring in your filled green bag and leave it under the table in the narthex.



(Please remember to check the expiration dates on food before donating.)

The New Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change,
which is pretty much everyone, since I'm clearly not you, God.
At least not the last time I checked.

And while you're at it, God,
please give me the courage to change what I need to change about myself,
which is frankly a lot, since, once again, I'm not you, which means I'm not perfect.
It's better to focus on changing myself than to worry about changing other people,
who, as you'll no doubt remember me saying, I can't change anyway.

Finally, give me the wisdom to just shut up
whenever I think that I'm clearly smarter than anyone else in the room,
that no one knows what they're talking about except me,
or that I alone have all the answers.

Basically, God, grant me the wisdom to remember that I'm not you.
Amen

America MEDIA , a Jesuit Ministry

MEMORIALS, HONORS & GIFTS

JULY 2025

JOY PACKS

Anita Young

IN MEMORY OF

Yona Ash from Craig Arney
Yona Ash from Kip & Laura Stransky

SHOES

Kerrie Ash
Tom Berlage & Cindy Hendrickson
Kym Citera
Deanna Codner
Kim Densmore
Ken & Therese Ellis
Fred Huff
Jeff & Becky Keck
Julie Marie Serdar Family Trust
Mary Stelpstra
Marlene Swenson
Marlene Swenson in Memory of Carolyn Ward
Ruth Tasa
Sharon Thaler

CHAIRS

Deanna Codner
Bob Dickson
Kim & Chris Rice
Mick & Marcia Shanahan
Ruth Tasa
Bill Taylor
Sharon Thaler
Ann Torruelas



THANK YOU PR. DAVID BRANDFASS AND PR. JULIE GERRISH!

We have been blessed to have Pr. David Brandfass and Pr. Julie Gerrish leading worship services this summer and preaching on the Book of Revelation while Pr. Braaten is away.

If you've missed any of their services at SOJ, you can catch up on the Revelation series at Christ Lutheran's website:
www.christsedona.org/sermon.

Past sermons are available by clicking on the date in the upper left corner of the slide.

Dates of past sermons will be displayed.

WELCA NEWS



The ladies of WELCA will meet for breakfast at Denny's on Thursday, August 14th at 9:30am. This will be our last summer breakfast meeting at Denny's as next month we resume our regular meetings in the Fellowship Hall. Be sure to join us then as we start to plan activities for the 2025-2026 year!

SOJ's MEN'S GROUP

NEW MEETING DAYS

SOJ's Men's Group will meet at the Red Rooster Cafe in Old Town at 8am on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month. Our August meetings will be on **August 14th and August 28th**. All men are invited to come for fellowship and a discussion on the Bible readings for the upcoming Sunday. For more information, contact Bob Dickson, 480-532-5750.



PSALMS FOR PRAYING

AN INVITATION TO WHOLENESS

by Nan C. Merrill

"Out of the silence, as I continue to meditate and dialogue with the Psalms, they become living prayers that evoke, albeit subtly, new insights, new emphases, new words and phrases, and in some instances, new verses."

— Nan C. Merrill, Author p.vii Preface to the Tenth Anniversary Edition.

Psalm 1

*Blessed are those who walk hand in hand with goodness,
who stand beside virtue, who sit in the seat of truth;
For their delight is in the Spirit of Love, and in
Love's heart they dwell day and night.
They are like trees planted by streams of water,
that yield fruit in due season, and their leaves flourish;
And in all that they do, they give life.
The unloving are not so; they are like dandelions which
the wind blows away.
Turning from the Heart of Love they will know
suffering and pain. They will be isolated from wisdom;
for Love knows the way of truth, the ways of ignorance will perish
as Love's penetrating Light breaks through hearts with illusions:
Forgiveness is the way.*

Psalm 2

*Why do nations and people plot against one another,
setting themselves apart and conspiring against the Beloved and
those who follow Love's way? They say to themselves "We are free
of Love's law; humility and service are for others."
The Beloved, who is ever present, can but smile at their foolishness,
knowing that one day, they will fall to their knees in regret.
Distracted by greed and arrogance they do not hear the Beloved's Voice
whispering in the silence: "Awaken all of you living in darkness!
We are all One in Love Consciousness.
You live in my Heart even as I live in yours.
For you are mine; I am your Beloved. I have given you
abundant life to love and care for all Creation.
May it be for the delight of All.
Yet to know Me, fears and illusions must be faced, as an iron rod
hitting a clay pot shining Light into the darkness."*

Submitted by Pr. Naomi Barcanic

FINANCIAL REPORT—June 2025



EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

If you know of someone that needs/wants help, fill out this form and put it in the "Peace" box.

Name(s) of member _____

Type of help wanted _____

How often _____

Your name (optional) _____

EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

Expressions of Faith has been serving the congregation of Spirit of Joy since October of 2023. Our group of wonderful volunteers have provided meals, visits, cards, and phone calls to those needing a little extra help.

There is a poster in the Fellowship Hall that identifies members who have been involved in this ministry. Our goal is to continue to identify members needing our assistance. By the poster there are forms to fill out if you need additional help or know of someone from the congregation that needs help. Please put the completed information in the box so that we can get back to you. If you have emergent needs, please contact the office who will convey this information to the team.

Look for cards for you to sign on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you for your continued support.

Trish Wood
email: sumlady3601@yahoo.com

Operating Fund—June

Operating Fund Income	Operating Fund Expenses	Pastoral Call Fund Adj.	Net Income
\$ 22,379.58	\$ 14,429.74	\$ 4,200.00	\$ (3,749.84)

Year-to-Date (Jan-June)

Operating Fund Income	Operating Fund Expenses	Pastoral Call Fund Adj.	Net Income
\$ 115,056.61*	\$ 73,665.34**	\$ 25,200.00	\$ 16,191.27

*Fundraising Income—\$775.95; Youth—\$700.00; Shoe Drive—\$1,568.00; Joy Pack Grant—\$1,926.00
**Youth \$800.00; Shoe Drive \$1,542.72

6/30/2025 Ending Balance

General Fund	90,541.95	
Mortgage Fund	5,044.53	
Pastoral Call Fund	\$25,200.00	(Banking: current vs full-time Pastoral expenses)
Restricted Ministries	<u>16,849.49</u>	
Ending Balance	\$137,635.97	

Board Restricted Fund—June

Board Restricted Income	Board Restricted Expenses	Net Income
\$ 6,325.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,325.00

Year-to-Date (Jan-June)

Board Restricted Income	Board Restricted Expenses	Net Income
\$ 7,005.00*	\$16,610.73**	\$ (9,605.73)

*Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$ 705.00	**Youth Camp Fee	\$250.00
WELCA for Chairs	\$5,000.00	Piano Tuning	\$700.00
Donation for Chairs	\$1,300.00	Building HVAC	\$9,145.73
		Parking Lot	\$5,415.00
		Landscaping	\$1,100.00

6/30/2025 Ending Balance

Building Fund	\$ 0.00
Landscaping Fund	811.02
Mortgage Principal	1,617.00
Organ/Piano Fund	2,300.87
Restricted Designated	2,950.70
Restricted Undesignated	<u>17,497.06</u>
	\$25,176.65

Bank 11 month CD	\$ 10,000.00
Mission Investment Fund Savings Balance	\$ 2,423.79
Mission Investment Fund Mortgage Owed	\$117,266.77
Credit Card Owed—Chairs	\$ 7,914.13

HUGE

SUMMER

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



AUGUST
BARBECUE
BASEBALL
BEACH
BIKE
BOAT
CAMP
FAMILY
FISHING
FLIGHT
FLIP FLOPS
FLOWERS
FRIENDS
GARDEN
HEAT
HOLIDAYS
HOT
HUMID
ICED TEA
INSIDE
JULY
JUNE
LEMONADE
OUTSIDE
PARK
PICNIC
PLAY
POOL
RELAX
SANDALS
SHORTS
SKATEBOARD
SOCCER
SUNSCREEN
SUNSET
SWIMMING
TAN
TANK TOPS
TENT
THEME PARK
TOUR
TRAVEL
TRIP
VACATION
WATERPARK

F	R	I	E	N	D	S	O	C	C	E	R	U	I	F	F	L	S	L	T
C	H	O	T	D	K	F	A	M	I	L	Y	X	V	S	O	K	E	E	S
R	B	W	L	V	S	R	E	W	O	L	F	N	W	O	A	M	N	I	G
T	A	U	G	U	S	T	A	D	P	Y	P	I	P	T	O	T	P	A	K
A	S	V	S	E	O	D	Q	P	L	C	M	L	E	N	E	M	R	R	C
N	E	U	I	K	Y	G	I	U	E	M	Y	B	A	J	F	D	A	Z	B
K	B	I	C	I	I	N	J	M	I	M	O	D	V	Y	E	P	Z	H	W
T	A	T	E	B	N	I	G	N	U	A	E	R	Z	N	R	T	R	I	P
O	L	S	D	N	S	H	G	P	R	H	I	H	E	E	J	R	D	B	M
P	L	S	T	O	I	S	G	D	P	T	K	H	T	L	R	W	S	I	H
S	R	A	E	I	D	I	W	S	I	H	F	A	S	U	A	P	S	Q	O
T	E	T	A	T	E	F	Q	Y	C	P	W	U	B	A	O	X	T	T	L
H	A	E	O	A	R	T	Y	A	N	Y	N	A	E	L	F	F	R	A	I
K	B	S	T	C	A	J	E	Q	I	S	R	U	F	D	L	P	O	O	D
R	G	N	R	A	M	B	P	X	C	B	E	P	A	I	I	K	H	B	A
A	T	U	A	V	W	M	J	R	E	G	I	N	G	R	X	S	S	I	Y
P	A	S	V	H	A	X	E	C	X	L	D	H	U	Z	U	H	T	D	S
R	N	T	E	C	K	E	U	D	F	X	T	G	Q	J	I	O	K	U	Z
I	V	C	L	E	N	E	J	V	S	L	A	D	N	A	S	A	T	P	O

The words appear UP, DOWN, BACKWARDS, and DIAGONALLY. Find and circle each word.



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SOJ Summer Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship—9:30am

Fellowship—following Sunday worship

August Highlights

- 3—Food Bank Sunday
- 9—Green Bag Food Event, Mtn View UMC, 10am
- 14—Men's Group @ Red Rooster Café, 8am
WELCA Breakfast at Denny's, 9:30am
- 20—Church Council Mtg (CR), 1pm
- 28—Men's Group at Red Rooster Café, 8:00am
Daytime Book Group (CR), 2pm

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 the office.