

MAY NEWSLETTER

JOY

“Celebrating and Sharing the Love of Jesus Christ”

In Transition

Pastoral transitions are funny things. They're inevitable—no pastor serves a congregation forever—and yet they nearly always catch most people off-guard—including the pastor! Twelve months ago I wasn't even seriously considering being anywhere else. Eight months ago Sister Jennie and I began to ask, “what if?” and less than a month later we first heard there was a congregation in southern Oregon that might make good use of both our sets of gifts.

But it never felt inevitable until—well, we have a new house under contract and a moving van booked. I suppose that settles it. Part of our hearts will remain in Tulsa, just as we still feel a strong affinity for the Peaks of Otter in southern Virginia.

So, far from “getting out of Dodge” as fast as possible, we're doing—indeed, for months now we've been doing—everything we can think of to set Joy up well for the future God intends for y'all.

We've been cleaning up and sorting Joy's archives—even as my desk remains a mess. We've been meeting with key leaders to pass along “institutional knowledge”—including things we've learned in just the last few months. We continue to work to integrate relatively new members—though we'll never get to know them as well as we'd like.

Transitions are a time when other folks will come and go. It's inevitable. It's also a time when financial supporters tend to pull back. That's not inevitable. I'm going to encourage Joy's leadership to tackle a few big-ticket property maintenance projects in the transition period, and also do some collective soul-searching as to where y'all see Joy headed next.

That'll all work best if you strongly consider maintaining your support of Joy—financially, but also with your attention, attendance, engagement, and maybe even stepping up in a new way. That'll look different for each of you. But if you love Joy like we've come to, it'll be a “no-brainer.” — Pastor Jon

MAY THE ROAD
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MAY THE SUN SHINE WARM
UPON YOUR FACE
THE RAINS FALL UPON YOUR
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AND, UNTIL
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MAY GOD HOLD YOU
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Healthy Communication

Transitions are naturally a time of heightened anxiety. For that reason it's a good time to remind everyone who cares about Joy what healthy communication looks like.

Direct communication is the key. Anonymous communication through third parties often feels easier, but unless one's only goal is to "vent," it rarely improves a situation.

Anonymous feedback can't be followed up on for clarification or further details, so the recipient knows something is wrong but is often unable to address the concern constructively.

We should distinguish confidentiality—healthy, important and often necessary—from secrecy, which is usually harmful. Confidentiality protects vulnerable people from harm. Secrecy generally protects the powerful.

Confidentiality is a crucial part of church work. Secret-keeping is different. Like giving anonymous feedback through a third party, it creates false intimacy between those keeping the secret, and tends to create or heighten power imbalances.

As Sister Jennie and I explored doing ministry elsewhere, that was kept confidential, not so much for our protection as for Joy's. In the months ahead Joy will be seeking another pastor, and for the sake of the ministry they are currently serving, confidentiality will need to be maintained for them, too.

It's been really hard not to share both our excitement and our building dread at the possibility of leaving Joy and moving away from Tulsa. And honestly, even as professionals, it's not always easy to distinguish confidentiality from secret-keeping.

But it is relatively easy to practice direct communication and shun anonymous feedback.

If something is important enough to share, it's important enough to need follow-up and future clarification.

If you cannot attach your name to feedback, speak to a Joy leader you trust, asking for confidentiality, but be open to them returning to you for clarification and further insight.

Pastor Jon



A Message from Council President

Hello fellow Joy congregants.

I know some of you have questions about our impending pastoral search. I spoke with Bishop Mike prior to the Synod Assembly this past weekend. Bishop Mike has scheduled a mid-June meeting with the Council. Our search will involve our Bishop-elect Becca Middeke Conlin. This will likely be a lengthy process that we will get through together.



Anyone interested in participating on the search committee please contact any Council member or myself.

For now, please plan to attend the final service with Pastor Jon and Sister Jennie on Sunday, May 21 and a reception afterward.

Lynn Jacobsen, Council President

Affirmation of Baptism for Eileen Guild—May 14 Celebration of First Communion for Evie Norford— May 21

Come celebrate with Eileen Guild and her family upon her Affirmation of Baptism. We will confirm her as a baptized child of God, and she will hear again an affirm the promises that were made on her behalf at her own baptism. Let's surround her as a community on Sunday, May 14!

There will be a reception with cake to follow worship. Be sure to stay afterwards.



On Sunday, May 21st, we will be officially welcoming Evie Norford to the communion table for her recognition of her First Communion after some learning with her and her family about what communion means. Come celebrate with Evie!





ARKANSAS-OKLAHOMA SYNOD

God's Grace In Motion

Synod Assembly 2023 Highlights

Thank you to **Pr. Jon, Sister Jennie, Lila Martini, Susan Humphrey and David Humphrey for representing Joy at this years AR-OK Synod Assembly May 5th—7th**

- We elected current **Director of Evangelical Mission/Associate for Youth and Young Adult Ministry** Becca Middeke-Conlin to a 6-year term as our next synod bishop. She was elected by a 52-38 margin over Pr. Peter Olson of the Shared Ministry of North Central Oklahoma on the fifth ballot.
- Of 13 names offered by assembly members on the first ballot, 6 allowed their names to go forward. Pr. Alvaro Nova Ochoa of Comunidad de Esperanza here in Tulsa was on the fourth ballot with Becca and Peter and had an opportunity to share his vision for the synod.
- We thanked Joy member Bp. Mike Girlinghouse and his wife Terrie for 12 years of faithful service to our synod with a farewell banquet and many gifts, including a large and lovely piece of hand-drawn artwork from Joy's own Bryan Waytula. The Waytulas have known Mike since his days at University Lutheran in Norman.
- We passed a synod budget for the next two years. Synod treasurer Bruce Snyder was thanked for three years of service, and we elected his successor and other people to a variety of synod positions. Our mission cluster coordinator for Cluster 5 (Tulsa) is still vacant since Lisa (Milzarek) Ohlde's untimely death early in the recent pandemic. Pr. Jon is officially still cluster dean, but Pr. Kara Farrow of Fellowship is currently slated to take over soon.
- We passed a resolution with a welcome statement making our synod a "Reconciling in Christ" synod. This means the synod will encourage and provide resources but not obligate congregations to consider their own statements explicitly welcoming LGBTQ+ individuals into full inclusion in the life of the church.
- We also passed a memorial to the next Churchwide assembly calling for creative approaches to ensuring the full funding of crucial Churchwide ministries. This mirrored actions taken at the last such assembly to push for full funding of Churchwide indigenous ministries.
- Our assembly theme was "Flavors of Leadership" and Bp. Mike led us in a variety of small group and pairing-off activities on this topic, mostly as an excuse for folks to mix and mingle more fully than business sessions and meals would otherwise allow.
- Offerings during the assembly raised over \$3,000 to be split between the ELCA Fund for Leaders and the Julius Pegues Synod Scholarship for Students of African Descent. The latter made its first two awards to young men who were present to receive them.
- Almost 20 anniversaries of ordination were recognized, including 10th anniversaries for Pr. Jon and Sr. Jennie (this coming November), 20th anniversaries for Pr. Alvaro Nova Ochoa and former Joy interim Pr. Carl Hoffman, and a 45th anniversary for Pr. Norm Dake.
- Joy musician Catherine Conger led music for Sunday morning worship to widespread acclaim. Sister Jennie was repeatedly thanked for leading the synod leadership team, which also served as this year's assembly planning team. She also served as worship assistant on Friday evening.

New Members at Joy!

Please take time to get to know and welcome Joy's newest members.

Pictured on top is our lovely musician Catherine and her son Canon and husband Nick. We also welcome Mary Jane Halley!

On the bottom and side photos we welcome the Norfords—Krissi, Dan and Evie





To those who gave birth this year to their first child—we celebrate with you.

To those who lost a child this year—we mourn with you.

To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains—we appreciate you.

To those who experienced loss through miscarriage, failed adoptions, or running away—we mourn with you.

To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment—we walk with you. Forgive us when we say foolish things. We don't mean to make things harder.

To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms—we need you.

To those who have warm and close relationships with your children—we celebrate with you.

To those who have disappointment, heartache, and distance with your children—we sit with you.

To those who lost their mothers this year—we grieve with you.

To those who experienced abuse at the hands of your own mother—we acknowledge your experience.

To those who lived through driving tests, medical tests, and the overall testing of motherhood—we are better for having you in our midst.

To those who have aborted children—we remember them and you on this day.

To those who are single and long to be married and mothering your own children—we mourn that life has not turned out the way you longed for it to be.

To those who stepparent—we walk with you on these complex paths.

To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren, yet that dream is not to be, we grieve with you.

To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year—we grieve and rejoice with you.

To those who placed children for adoption—we commend you for your selflessness and remember how you hold that child in your heart.

And to those who are pregnant with new life, both expected and surprising—we anticipate with you.

—A poem by Amy Young,

Easter at Joy

Everyone came out to celebrate our risen Lord together. Thanks to everyone who made it happen!

The lilies, the egg hunt, all the breakfast dishes, and most importantly you, you all showed up to make it special!



Pictures from Painting of Joy Family Crosses

Thank You Donna Gould!



A huge thank you to Donna Gould for introducing and leading many of us through a new kind of art—ceramics!

Everyone had fun and appreciated your gifts. I'm sure we'll be asking Donna to lead us through something else in ceramics again sometime.



Thank you again to all who came and supported this new learning!

Sample of crosses painted before firing.



And the finished crosses!

Some of these crosses will find their way to new members hands and for other celebrations of life together as church!

Your 2023 Joy Congregation Council and Mission Endowment Fund Board!

Thank you to each of you for stepping up to be a part of the leadership in different ways at Joy. Your care and compassion for Joy and each of its members shines through.



Faith Formation at Joy



Sunday school for kids will be wrapping up the school year and so their final Sunday school session will be Sunday, May 21.

Adult Sunday school will wrap up on Sunday, May 14 with final thoughts on the book of Revelation.

The kids and adults are already living into learning about their faith and having fun doing it! Here is where you'll meet depending on your age:

- Elementary kids are meeting each Sunday in the Council meeting room at the end of the Education Wing in the library/Council room. All elementary ages PreK-6th grade are welcome.
- Adult Sunday school continue to meet with Pastor Jon as they just started a short and new Bible Study topic. The Book of Revelation. They are meeting in the Fellowship Hall. Grab your coffee and come join for conversation!



Take Note

The Sunday school kids will have some time with Catherine Conger our musician, in Sunday school this Sunday, May 14 to praise God's name through music!



A Fresh Change Outreach Project through LIRS

“A Fresh Change” Program through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) is collecting simple backpacks filled with a word of welcome and a change of clothes—sweatshirt, sweatpants, socks and underwear—either for men or women who have newly entered into LIRS’s care as immigrants and are in need of some fresh clothes.

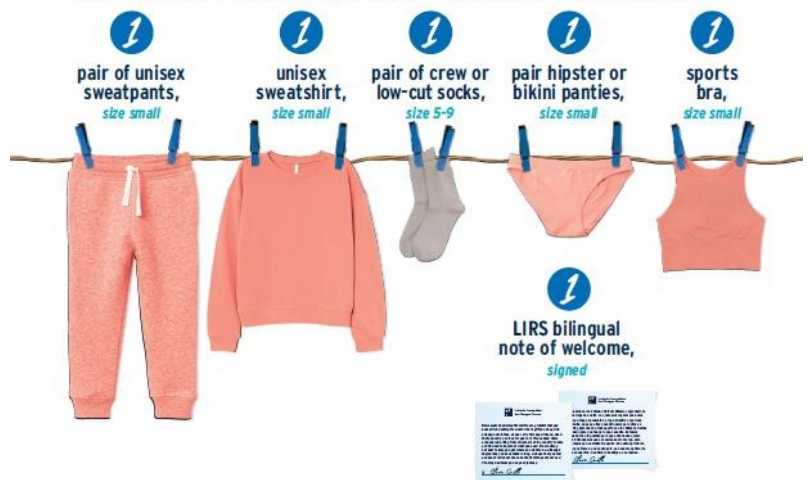
Below you will see the items that are needed. You can pick either women's or men's and size small or medium. There are some items that are the same and other items are slightly different so please pay attention to details. They are very specific that these are the only items that they can accept in the backpacks. **So in this case extra items not shown on the pictures below cannot be used for this purpose.**

There will continue to be a bright green basket for collecting items. If you have any questions please let me know. If you are a Thrivent member and want to make a financial contribution to this project please talk to Sister Jennie or Sarah in the office and we can direct you on how you can help.

In Peace,

Sister Jennie
Witness Team Chair

Women’s Clothing (small and medium)



Men’s Clothing (small and medium)



Women's Ministries



Esther Circle Bible Study

**Joy Lutheran Church
May 13 at 10:30 a.m.**

Join us as we continue our study, The Mothers and Daughters of the Bible. Come on a journey to get to know these women better, to see what the Bible tells us about their extraordinary lives. If you have any questions, contact Carol Rowe-carolrowe@cox.net

Joy Lydia Quilters

The Lydia quilters meet on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 12:30. We bring a sack lunch. Some people come and work on their own craft projects & enjoy the company!! Come on down!!

Our hands to God's work!



Joy Lutheran Outreach

Joy's Food Chest for the Jenks Community Food Bank

**Current requested items:
Canned milk, jelly (no glass jars),
mac & cheese (shell type that
requires no milk or butter), soup of
any kind, cans of chicken, cereal,
pasta sauce, canned tomatoes.**

"Helping to feed those in need"

Thank you Joy members that
contribute items every month!

And, thank you Michael Mueller for
delivering the food items!

Operation Hope

Collection of Toiletries

Items needed for families and individuals
coming out of prison and getting back
into the community.

Deodorant - Shampoo
Conditioner - Body lotion
Moisturizers - Bar soap
Shower gels - Toothbrushes
Toothpaste

**Thank you from Pr. Norm and
Operation Hope.**



Musical Note for Joy Youth and Children

One Sunday a month
Catherine Conger will be
joining the youth SS hour to
have some fun musical
moments! The goal is to
introduce youth to church
music both old and new. At
some point, those kids who
wish to do so will be invited to
start showcasing their favorite
songs in Sunday services!

Joy Choir

Joy Lutheran Choir is meeting on Wednesdays at
7:00 and going to start singing music at services
twice a month. Our rehearsal lasts around an hour
and we can use all the voices and talents that are
available. During the Lenten Wednesday evening
services, the choir will meet immediately after
worship. **ALL are welcome!**

If you are curious about joining the worship and
music committee, Joy Lutheran Choir, or are simply
interested in singing or playing a solo on Sunday
morning, please contact the music director Catherine
Conger. God Bless you all, and let's make a JOYful
noise in 2023!

Birthdays at Joy

Happy May Birthday

Bonnie Halverson	5/7
Anna Richers	5/12
Caleb Myers	5/17
Bob Young	5/19
Emma Bloomfield	5/22
Bryan Waytula	5/24
Kate Rogers	5/25



Synod Family Camp June 2-4 St. Crispin's Conference Center & Camp

Come One, Come All! (You're not too old for this!)

Enjoy a weekend of worship and fellowship with your family and your synod family! June 2-4 at St. Crispin's Conference Center & Camp in Wewoka OK, a place of rest and renewal with trails for hiking and bike riding, a lake for swimming and kayaking plus plenty of space for other outdoor activities and indoor spaces for crafting and connecting. Bring your family, your extended family or your church family. Throughout the weekend there will be workshop services led by our LYO Youth and Synod Staff plus downtime to rest and enjoy a weekend away. This is an intergenerational event and is open to people regardless of age and "family" make up.

June 2-4. \$175 a person in hotel like-accommodations (up to 4 people per room), includes all meals Saturday and breakfast and lunch on Sunday. An additional \$20 charge per person for those doing the ropes course. Come anytime after 2pm on Friday, Friday dinner not included.



Finance Report

Finance Committee: We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month. That will be:

May 11, 2023

Finance Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Joy Lutheran Church Finance Committee will be held on Thursday evening, May 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Financial Report

Following is the financial summary of contributions and expenses for the month of March 2023.



	March 2023	March—YTD 2023
Income	\$22,052	64,984
Expense	19,071	57,853
Net Income	2,981	7,131



Our 2023 Joy Lutheran Council:

(L to R)

Lynn Jacobsen - President

Ann Lee - Vice President

Sara Richers - Secretary

David Humphrey - Treasurer

Eleanore Beymer

Brenda Baker

Nancy Sies - *Not Pictured*

Pr. Jon Myers

Church Staff:

The Rev. Jon Myers — Pastor

Sister Jennie Myers — Dir. Of Discipleship

Catherine Conger — Director of Music

Sarah Smith — Office Manager