

The February 2024 Monthly Newsletter of Community of Joy Lutheran Church

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The season of Lent begins on  
**Ash Wednesday, February 14th.**

**Ash Wednesday services will be at  
12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m. and will  
include Imposition of Ashes.**

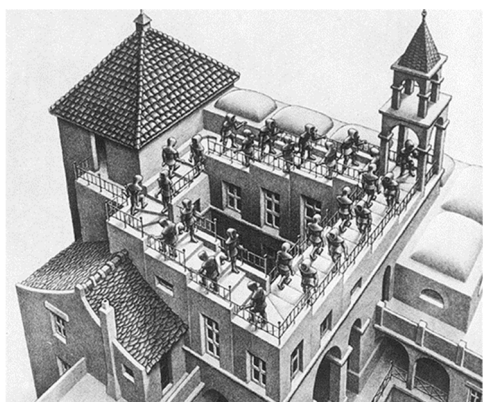
**Join Us this Lent for Agape Feasts –  
Wednesdays at 6 pm, beginning February 21st**

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## Lent: The Way Up Is the Way Down

During our Wednesday evening events this Lent, we will be hearing reflections on the theme of *Falling Upward* and I hope you will join us! This paradoxical concept is borrowed from the title of a book by Father Richard Rohr, who teaches that in the spiritual journey, oftentimes the way up is the way down. In other words, we often experience God's call more profoundly in situations of crisis, discomfort, and failure than in smooth sailing. Or as Rohr has stated, "The two great paths to spiritual transformation are great love and great suffering."

Of course, when it comes to our own personal transformation, we'd all prefer the love option to the suffering one. Love feels much nicer than suffering, after all. But of course, when you really love something or someone, you soon discover that even these two paths are sometimes one in the same. Ask any sleep deprived mother who is nursing her baby. Or a spouse who is watching their loved one succumb to dementia. Sometimes to love is to be down in the trenches with those we love. Then again, if we really love them, where else would we rather be?



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**Souper Bowl Sunday is coming on  
February 11th!**

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## People Page

# February Birthdays

2nd: Sherri Bathje	16th: Barbara Reeves
5th: Caleb Parrott	17th: Craig Pirlot
Jon Shodean	19th: Sarah Farrell
6th: Mary Templeton	Pr. Paul Schick
7th: Erin Doles	22nd: Noah Shodean
9th: Ron Bencke	24th: Jane Fiedler
11th: Jean Potabi	27th: Tony Sciortino
12th: Kristen Sillence	
Leah Felty	

### Wedding Anniversaries in February



20th: Lance & Heather Himmelberger

*In Our Thoughts  
& Prayers*



**This past  
month we  
prayed for:**

Donna Doles	Patt Crown (1/7)
Dick & Peg Tool	Lewis Gonzales (1/7)
Joan Bouty, Louise Scott	Kay Bauer (1/7)
Warren Sullivan	Cliff Walker (1/22)
Steve Gamrath	Geneva Ellis (1/23)
Paul & Jackie Anderson	Kelly Strunk (1/23)
Norma Gruber	Sandy Rubio (1/23)
Nance Crow	Eloise Spradley (1/23)
Bill & Jean Potabi	Baby Timothy (1/23)
Sal & Maryann Cano	Family of Connie White (1/27)
Paul Blott	Family of Linda Anderson (1/22)
	Rachel Ortiz (1/31)
	Andrew Saunders (1/31)

*If you know of a person or a situation that you would like included in our prayer list, please email them to Earlene (earlene@communityofjoy.com).*

### Together in Mission

Camino de Vida—Albuquerque  
Iglesia Cristo Rey—El Paso, TX

### COMMUNITY OF JOY

841 Saratoga Dr. NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87144

Phone: 505-896-2543

[www.communityofjoy.com](http://www.communityofjoy.com)

**Pastor:**

**Pr. Paul Schick**

[pastorpaul@communityofjoy.com](mailto:pastorpaul@communityofjoy.com)

**Church Administrator:**

**Earlene Shroyer** [earlene@communityofjoy.com](mailto:earlene@communityofjoy.com)

**Worship Leader:**

**Jon Shodean** [jon@communityofjoy.com](mailto:jon@communityofjoy.com)

**Treasurer:** Dick Tool, Greg Quintana

**Bookkeeper:** Earlene Shroyer

**Proofreader:** Jean Potabi

#### Congregation Council

Lee Glauvitz—President  
Karen Lenoski—Secretary  
Sandy Edwards  
Bill Kostel  
Diane Harmon  
Barbara Reeves

#### Ministries Leads

- + **Altar Guild:** Debbie Sciortino
- + **Confirmation:** Pr. Paul Schick
- + **F.E.A.S.T.:** Deborah Williams
- + **Fellowship:** Neal Shotwell
- + **Joyful Hearts Women's Ministry:**  
Sandy Edwards
- + **Memorial Committee:** Bill Potabi
- + **Sunday School:** Shaila Shodean
- + **Tech Ministry Leader:** Kristen Sillence
- + **Beer Buddies:** Tony Sciortino

*For any reports or information, contact the appropriate person listed above*

## Announcements

### Women's Bible Study Begins Tuesday, February 6 "Bad Girls"

Contact Elaine Gauden for location and details,  
or contact the office.

## SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY IS COMING!!



COJ Soup luncheon featuring soup, bread, and dessert



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
after church in the COJ  
Fellowship Hall

To Raise \$\$\$ for



via a Free Will offering

### **Men Alive!**

**Men Alive!** will be meeting in person on the second and fourth Saturday in February (10th and 24th) at 8:30 am. We will be studying Chapters 18 & 19 of Matthew. As is our custom, we will start with a hearty breakfast and lively discussions.

Please contact Charles Fiedler at [cwfiedler@gmail.com](mailto:cwfiedler@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

### **Beer Buddies**

Beer Buddies will resume on February 15th.



## Announcements

### Pathways to the Sacred: *Exploring the Major Religions*

Join Pastor Paul Sundays after worship for an exploration of the four other major religions. Learn about the beliefs, practices, and histories of these spiritual traditions as we discuss the profound impact they've had on our world, the things they hold in common, and how they are different.

**February 11<sup>th</sup>      Hinduism**

**February 18<sup>th</sup>      Buddhism**

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>          Judaism**

**March 10<sup>th</sup>        Islam**



**Join Us this Lent for Agape Feast  
Wednesdays & Member Reflections  
on the Theme of *Falling Upward* –  
Wednesdays at 6 pm,  
Starting February 21<sup>st</sup>**

This Lent we will once again gather each Wednesday evening (beginning the week after Ash Wednesday), for Agape Feasts. This practice- which has its roots in Jesus' ministry and the earliest Christian communities- is a sort of hybrid between worship and a meal. It consists of a potluck meal that is woven throughout with fellowship, prayers, music, a reflection, and communion.

Each Wednesday during these meals, members of our community will be sharing reflections on the theme of *Falling Upward*. This theme (borrowed from a book by Richard Rohr), will center on stories of how God often uses our hardest moments to call forth in us the greatest transformations.

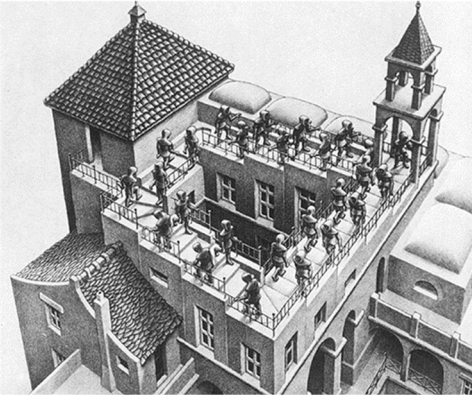
**Food:** For the meals, please feel free bring the traditional Lenten soup, or whatever your favorite potluck dish is. (We're Lutherans, we can be flexible!) Or, if you don't have time to make food, buy something- or just come!

**Are You Interested in Joining Community of Joy Church?  
Let Pr. Paul or the Office Know!**

## Worship News

### Lent: The Way Up Is the Way Down

*Continued from page 1*



We just recently returned from Arizona where we said goodbye to Stephanie's mother, Connie. She was a wonderful, sweet woman, and she is finally at rest after over a decade of battling cancer. There is nothing much good about cancer itself, but I can say that Connie's condition did inspire her to use these past ten years to spend as much time with loved ones as possible, even traveling in the last couple of months of life, despite being very ill. We are so thankful to have moved to NM, which we did in part so that we could be near to them. And though it has been difficult several months for everyone, we are grateful to have gotten to spend so much time in the trenches with her in the final months of her life, as she carried her cross.

As we approach Lent, I wonder how many of you feel about this season. Is it sort of a downer with all its seriousness and talk of death and crosses? I suppose it can be. And what about the cross? How do we see this symbol? Is it a symbol of an angry God who loves punishment? Is the main point that a wrathful God has been satisfied through the blood of his own Son??

That's the language some find meaning in. But personally, I prefer to see the cross as the symbol of a God who knows that the way up is the way down. That you cannot truly love people who are experiencing suffering without also joining in their experience of suffering. The cross is God in Jesus entering into the trenches with us, and even dying in the trenches with us. And then on Easter, showing us that if we are willing to entrust ourselves to God on the way down, we will find our lives back up again. And that is what we call resurrection.

I pray, my friends, that we would all be blessed in many good and joyful ways over this season of Lent. But if pain or crisis should come our way, let us entrust ourselves the spiritual journey that Jesus walked before us. Let us see that often the way up is the way down. And let us believe that in Christ our lives can fall upwards into the grace of God.

Yours in Christ, -Pastor Paul

## Memorial Fund Committee News

The Memorial Fund comes from donations that people have made to honor or memorialize a spouse, parent, grandchild, sibling or any person who is of special importance to them. The names of the special person and the donor are recorded in the Memorial Book. This book is available for viewing inside the church entrance.

The Memorial Fund Committee is considering a number of projects for our church. These projects are beyond what is covered by the regular budget and tend to be items that benefit the church attendees, i.e., the automatic door openers. The committee is now looking into chair risers to make sitting easier for those with hip conditions. One option is 'KaBoost'; others are being considered.

Please keep this possibility to contribute in mind. If you have any questions for how to contribute, please contact a committee member: Bill Potabi, Kristen Sillence, Sandy Edwards, Pat Shodean or Earlene Shroyer .



## Our Church



# The Journey Begins

**Ash Wednesday** is on February 14th, services at noon and 7:00 p.m.

**Agape Feast** begins February 21st at 6:00 p.m.

### ***Holy Week—Looking Ahead***

**Palm Sunday**—March 24th

**Maunder Thursday** Service—March 28th at 7:00 p.m.

**Good Friday** Worship service— March 29th at 7:00 p.m.

**Easter Sunday**—March 31, 2024

- ◆ Easter Sunrise service - 6:30 a.m.—Easter Potluck breakfast to follow
- ◆ Easter Celebration Service—10:00 a.m.

## **THANK YOU TO OUR January VOLUNTEERS!**

### **Ushers:**

Dennis & Kris Simpson, Lee & Jill Glauvitz,  
Pat Shodean, Brooke Kerns,  
Tom & Meghan Lyman

### **Readers:**

Lori Brown, Charlie Fiedler, Ron Bencke,  
Greg Edwards

### **Communion Assistants:**

Pat Shodean, Diane Brauer, Laura Reu,  
Kris Simpson, Josh Welbaum

### **Kitchen Angels:**

Neal Shotwell, Dianne Hensley, Suzanne Waite

### **Altar Guild:**

Kris Simpson, Barb Morton, Diane Brauer,  
Sandy Edwards, Debbie Sciortino

### **Communion Bread Baker:**

Paula Thomas

### **Audio/Video Team:**

Diane Brauer, Sandy Edwards, Zach Shotwell

### **Nursery Attendants:** Michaela Lovell,

Ava Rouselle

### **Counters:**

Pat Shodean, Barbara Reeves

## Sunday School

***Sunday mornings from 11:05—11:45 p.m.***

Sunday school will resume on Sunday, January 7 with two classes—one for pre-k through 4th grade and one for 5th-7th grade.

If you have questions about Sunday School, or to register children to participate, please see **Shaila Shodean**. You can register your children for Sunday school in person, or do so beforehand by picking up a registration form online or at the church.

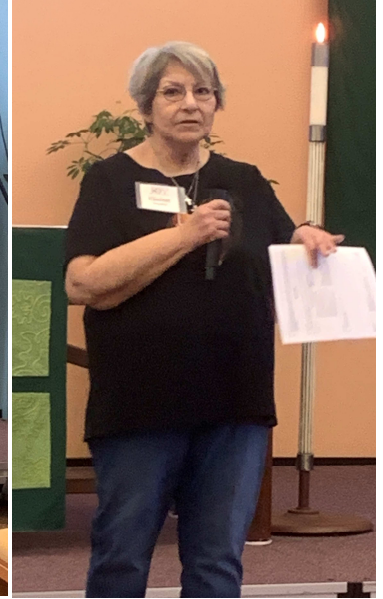
## Our Church



*Council President  
Lee Glauvitz*



*Welcome to new council members  
Diane Harmon and Barbara Reeves*



*Elaine Gauden  
announcing  
Date Night Drop Off*

### SERMON ON THE AMOUNTS

#### Giving for Year through December 31, 2023

Giving	Actual	Budget	more/(less) than Budget
Programs:	\$212,060.00	\$207,025.00	\$5,035.00
Building:	\$54,402.00	\$53,400.00	\$1,002.00
Both Funds:	\$266,462.00	\$260,425.00	\$6,037.00

*Thank you for your faithful financial stewardship.*

### Assisted Listening System

Community of Joy owns a *Peavey Assisted Listening System*. The equipment pulls signal from the audio system and sends it to wireless receivers that individuals can check out to use each service. This will allow people to hear the scripture readings, the sermon and the music.

We currently own four receivers, four sets of ear buds, and headsets. You are welcome to bring your own ear buds or headsets to use with a receiver.



**Join Us for Worship in the Sanctuary,  
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.**

## Joyful Hearts Women's Ministry



**Joyful Hearts will meet on  
Saturday, February 10th at 10:00am**

### Souper Bowl Sunday is coming on February 11, 2024!

Souper Bowl Sunday is **February 11th** and Joyful Hearts has kicked off the Souper Bowl Sunday fundraiser for *Storehouse West*! This year, as we did last year, we are only collecting **monetary donations** for *Storehouse West*. There are two reasons for this. The first is that by making a monetary donation *Storehouse West* can purchase the items that they need the most, including perishable items such as produce and meat. That leads to the second reason and that is their money goes further when making purchases directly because they get a discount due to buying in bulk. Joyful Hearts will have a table set up in the Fellowship Hall the next two Sundays where you can make your donation. If you are writing a check, please make the check out to **Storehouse West!**



To celebrate our donation to *Storehouse West*, we will have a Soup Luncheon (including soup, bread/crackers, and dessert) immediately following the worship service on Sunday, February 11th. There will be a free will offering, and any monies collected at the luncheon will go to *Storehouse West*. Souper Bowl Sunday, February 11th will be the last day for donations. Last year, we donated **\$1400** to *Storehouse West*, so let's try and increase this year's Souper Bowl Sunday monetary collection for a very worthy cause!

**COJ partners in ministry are always so giving,  
so let's make this a great Souper Bowl Sunday for *Storehouse West*!**

### Grow Your Own Pizza?



Now is your chance! For only \$38.95 you can purchase a climate-hardy organic, heirloom, non-GMO seed kit to grow everything you need to create your own pizza (except the crust!) The kit includes seeds to grow tomatoes, tomatillos, spinach, sweet pepper, onion, basil, oregano, thyme, and cayenne hot pepper.

Interfaith Power & Light, a faith-based US non-profit organization, is offering this curated seed kit in honor of their 2024 Faith Climate Action Week theme "Common Ground: Cultivating Connections Between Our Faith, Our Food, and the Climate."

For more information and to place your order, go to <https://interfaith-power-light.myshopify.com/products/pizza-garden-seed-collection>



## Beyond Our Walls



**Storehouse West** is a food pantry and children's clothes closet that serves individuals and families who are residents of Sandoval County, New Mexico and meet the federal income guidelines for low-moderate income households. **Storehouse West** can supply registered households with an

emergency food package once a month and can assist with Water and Waste Management bills once per year

### FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

**Storehouse West** distributed more than 5,000 food packages in 2022, equaling almost 210,000 pounds of food. Community donations are an important part of our supply chain. This month the pantry has a short, but essential list that we need for our monthly food distributions.

#### PANTRYWISH LIST

PEANUT BUTTER!!!

BREAKFAST CEREAL!!

CANNED FRUIT!!!

RAMEN NOODLES!!!

DRIED BEANS—red, black or white

**Greatest NEED  
is  
CEREAL !**

Monetary donations for on-going needs can also be made by check to **Storehouse West** and mailed to:  
Storehouse West, 1030 F. Veranda Dr. SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124



*Children's Clothes Closet gave out 250 coats this winter. In March they will be switching over to Spring/Summer Clothes. However, if cold weather items are donated, they will be accepted and put into storage for next year.*

**252 lbs. of food, 4 knit hats, socks, and 2 boxes of children's clothing was delivered to Storehouse West during the month of January. Thank you for your donations!**

## AN EASY WAY TO SUPPORT COJ's GOOD SAMARITAN FUND

### **Smith's Inspiring Donations**

This is an easy way to provide funds to Community of Joy's **Good Samaritan Fund.**

If you are not already a Smith's Rewards Card member, you can register for one at <https://www.smithsfoodanddrug.com/i/community/smiths-inspiring-donations> Then, link your account with **Community of Joy Church (MJ324)**. Use your Smith's card every time you shop. It's as simple as that.



***During the period of October 1—December 31, 2023 we earned \$37.23 for the Good Samaritan Fund!***

# Community Connections



## Draw All You Can Workshop

Star Heights Community Center  
800 Polaris Blvd  
Rio Rancho

Collaborative (couples, family bonding, team building), fun, no experience needed

Fun prompts and ideas to guide you along the way. Create a complex and detailed art poster

**Feb 24, 2024 at 3 pm**

**\$40/couple \$15 each additional person**

[www.rr-cc.org](http://www.rr-cc.org)



[rr-cc.org](http://rr-cc.org)

## ART ON THE MESA'S FEBRUARY MINI MONET WORKSHOP



**Marble painted  
Valentine's Day cards**

**\$20 ages 3-6  
with adult**

**Sat February 10  
1pm-2 pm**



**Star Heights  
Community center  
800 Polaris Blvd  
Rio Rancho**

