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Jesus and Immersion Learning

I am a person who likes to try to get at things with theories and my head, but God often teaches us that the deepest spiritual lessons can only really be learned through experiences and the heart. As Jesus' own life shows, following God is largely a matter of what educators call, immersion learning.

A few weeks ago, a couple of COJ members and I travelled to El Paso for our yearly Synod Assembly, which this year focused on the theme of faith and immigration. Over those few days we heard from some good speakers who shared many interesting facts about the plight of those who, usually out of desperation, flee their homes. These talks were good, but in truth the most powerful thing about this assembly were what they called *immersion experiences*, which brought assembly participants to a variety of sites along the Mexican and American borders.

As I shared in a recent sermon, the site I visited was run by Border Servant Core in Las Cruces, which began as a small ministry of a nearby Lutheran Church and has since grown into a major NGO partner of government immigration services. These days the site serves as what they call a "soft landing spot", which ensures that asylum seekers released from ICE custody- who are usually families with small children - find the basic services they need before heading on to their sponsor families.

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Mark Your Calendar!



Community of Joy
Vacation Bible School
June 19—23, 2023
REGISTER NOW!

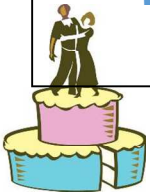
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People Page

June Birthdays

2nd: Troy Parrott	14th: Diane Brauer
4th: Earlene Shroyer	18th: Lincoln Reu
7th: Michaela Lovell	Lynette Schurdevin
8th: Sebastian Farrell	22nd: Matthew Staniszewski
9th: Louise Scott	23rd: Mike Woerner
10th: Nancy Winkler	28th: Pete Doles
11th: Helga Woerner	
12th: Richard Huxtable	

Wedding Anniversaries in June



7th: Jim & Neal Shotwell
8th: Michael & Tiffani Lovell
Tony & Debbie Sciortino
24th: Tom & Meghan Lyman



Charlotte Griffith
 Donna Doles
 Dick & Peg Tool
 Connie White
(Stephanie's mom)
 Joan Bouty, Louise Scott
 Warren Sullivan
 Charles & Suzanne Davis
 Steve Gamrath
 Paul & Jackie Anderson
 Family of Mary Halverson
 (5/7)
 Tammy Olson (5/7)
 George & Elaine Gauden
 (5/7)
 Janine Martwick (5/14)
 Peggy Reed (5/14)

David Brown (5/14)
 Sandy Brown (5/14)
 Monika & Jasmine Brown
 (5/14)
 Geneva Ellis (5/14)
 Eloise Spradley (5/14)
 Melissa Eckelbarger (5/14)
 Charlie Dillon (5/21)
 Baby Zane (5/22)
 Jordan Maddock (5/24)
 David Laird (5/24)
 Cliff Walker (5/24)
 The Shotwell family (5/28)
 Tony Chau (5/28)
 Sandra Candelaria (5/28)
 Gayle Phillips (5/28)

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).

COMMUNITY OF JOY

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Pastor:

Pr. Paul Schick
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Worship Leader:

Jon Shodean jon@communityofjoy.com

Treasurer: Dick Tool, Greg Quintana

Bookkeeper: Earlene Shroyer

Proofreader: Jean Potabi

Congregation Council

Lee Glauvitz—President
 Chris McGill—Vice President
 Karen Lenoski—Secretary
 Sandy Edwards
 Bill Kostel
 Diane Parham

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:** Stephanie Schick
- ✦ **Tech Ministry Leader:** Kristen Sillence
- ✦ **Worship Accompanist:** Keith Jordan
- ✦ **Beer Buddies:** Tony Sciortino

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

Announcements

A New Bible Study— “How We Got the Bible” Sundays, June 4 & 11

What original writings lie behind the English Bible translations we read in church each week? What ancient manuscripts exist as evidence for our current biblical text? How did the New Testament develop? Join us for this exploration of the documents that lie at the center of our Christian faith taught by **Pastor David Schick**.



Solar Fundraising Update

Our Solar Project fundraising is well underway, and we are happy to report that we have already collected over \$15,000 in donations- which brings us halfway to our 30k goal! Thank you for your amazing generosity!

We mailed out donation letters earlier this week, so if you have not yet had the chance to contribute, please expect to find these mailings with a post-marked envelope in your mailbox soon!

Men Alive! is going LIVE!

Men Alive! is going LIVE with the Men's Breakfast! We have been meeting via ZOOM for the past two years and are going to join together in person in the Fellowship Hall on **Saturdays, June 10th & 24th at 8:30am** for a hearty breakfast, insightful conversation, prayer, and study of Matthew Chapter 8 .

All men, young or old, are welcome to join us. If you have any questions or want to confirm that you will be joining us for breakfast, drop Charlie a note at cwfiedler@gmail.com.

Beer Buddies

We will be meeting on **Thursday, June 15th at 6 pm** at **Beer Lab 101 (BL101)** on Southern Blvd on the back patio in the Elevate Plaza. The Stuffed Lust food truck will be available to order munchies or a meal.

This is a men's only event for beer/beverage and eats. Bring a friend, all men are welcome.



Announcements

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



A Celebration of Life Service for Barbara Shotwell will be held on Saturday, June 24th at 11:00 a.m.

A Memorial Service for Ron Tafoya will be held on Friday, June 30th at 10:00 a.m.

A Visit from Luther House Campus Ministry, UNM June 25, 2023

Join us the last Sunday of this month as we welcome Pastor Rhonda Newby-Torres and students from Luther House Campus Ministry at UNM to worship, and hear their stories and perspectives as they help lead our service!



On April 30, 2023 we welcomed our newest COJ member—Diane Harmon!



Joyful Hearts Derby Day Tea Party, May 6, 2023

Worship News

THANK YOU TO OUR MAY VOLUNTEERS!

Ushers:

Lee & Jill Glauvitz, Chris McGill, Pat Shodean, Dennis & Kris Simpson

Readers:

Deborah Williams, Karen Lenoski, Greg Edwards

Communion Assistants:

Diane Brauer, Melissa Eckelbarger, Laura Reu, Pat Shodean, Dennis & Kris Simpson

Altar Guild:

Sandy Edwards, Diane Brauer, Kris Simpson, Deb Sciortino

Communion Bread Baker:

Paula Thomas

Audio/Video Team:

Diane Brauer, Sandy Edwards, Zach Shotwell

Nursery Attendants:

Michaela Lovell, Olivia Rousselle, Ava Rousselle

Counters:

Pat Shodean, Lynette Schurdevin

You Can Never Thank People Enough

A big **Thank You!** to



Dennis Simpson—for repairing and restriping COJ's parking lot—a HUGE job!

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.



Digital Worship: For those who are not ready to return to worship indoors, please know that we continue to offer worship online on our **YouTube Channel**. Since we are now recording this service live, it will be available from 10 AM onward on Sundays. You can find the service bulletin on COJ's website.

Worship News

Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly held in El Paso, TX



The annual Synod Assembly met in El Paso, TX May 16-18, and along with Pastor Paul and Karen Lenoski, I also attended as a synod council member representing the greater Albuquerque area. It was a wonderful gathering with the theme Cruzado Fronteras or Crossing Borders.

On Wednesday, many participants traveled to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico to deliver needed supplies and meet with refugees, others went to the Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey church, which is led by Pastor Rosemary Sanchez-Guzman and Pastor Juan de Dios Lopez, to meet with the refugees that are being sheltered

there. Many other El Paso and Las Cruces faith communities continue to shelter immigrants.

I attended a workshop at the convention center where I heard two young women, who are cousins, left Venezuela and traveled mostly by walking and some hitchhiking through Columbia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico and finally receiving asylum in the United States. They began their travels in January and arrived in Juarez in April. They were up against the cartels, robbers, swindlers and more during their journey. After their story we heard from immigration and refugee services on the tremendous challenges the refugees need to overcome to apply for asylum in the United States. They need to show that they received asylum in each country they traveled through, claim asylum and why they cannot return to their home country, and finally they need to provide a sponsor who is willing to pay for their transportation to their new home in the U.S. Many of the churches in El Paso and Las Cruces assist in finding a sponsor while they await their asylum court date (could take up to 2 years for that to happen). Also, while they await for their court date they have very few opportunities to work.

While at the Assembly, I contacted my friend and former Border Servant Corp volunteer, Kari, to say hello and ask if I could see her and what the Border Servant Corp is doing to help refugees in Las Cruces.

Well, during our conversations, she asked an 'unusual' favor, would I be willing to bring a young mother and her 12-year-old daughter to Albuquerque airport on my return. I said most definitely, and after a tour of the wonderful Las Cruces refugee site with Kari, I was given the information on where to pick them up and what time to drop them off at the airport and who to contact.

Using Google translate Leslie and her daughter communicated with me their joy and mucho thanks for driving them to Albuquerque to begin their next adventure. On our drive north we needed to go through the border check point that is set up just before Hatch, NM. I let Leslie know to have her papers ready, but most importantly to breathe! I knew that God was with us on this journey, and we were waved right through. All was well and in celebration we stopped in Socorro at McDonalds for lunch (my treat) and they enjoyed their lunch and told me their story which began last September and the walking and the countries they went through and how glad they are here!

At the Albuquerque airport, I parked the car and brought them to a team that will get them through TSA and on the plane to their new home.

What a wonderful and priceless experience and a strong feeling God's in this journey.

Lynette Schurdevin

Youth & Children's Ministry

Sunday School and Confirmation are on Summer Break. We will continue to offer Children's sermons during worship and also plan to arrange some youth and family gatherings later this summer.



Community of Joy 2023 Vacation Bible School June 19—23, 2023

This summer, come be a part of Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp Vacation Bible School as we explore *It's All About Grace*

When? June 19—23, 2023

What Time?

Grades K-6: 9am—2pm Mon.—Fri.

Registration forms are on the counter between the offices, or online at communityofjoy.com

Anxious to help with planning or ministry to youth?

We need helpers during both the day sessions and the evening session. Places for everyone. Just let the church office know you're interested.

Mark your calendars! This is a great opportunity to participate in one of COJ's landmark-and very fun ministries.

There are sign-up sheets on the counter outside the office— please sign up to provide lunch, dinner, or snacks.



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

Joyful Hearts Women's Ministry

Joyful Hearts News

The Derby Day Tea Party was our official kickoff to raise money for Haven House, the only domestic violence shelter in Sandoval County. We are continuing to collect monetary donations until Father's Day (June 18th). There is a can on the table near the Domestic Violence Awareness poster for your donation.

Vacation Bible School is June 19th-23rd. The VBS attendees will be kicking off our School Supplies collection for Colinas Del Norte Elementary School in Rio Rancho. Almost 50% of the students receive free or reduced lunch, so they do need our help! The list included in this newsletter was given to us by the staff at Colinas Del Norte, so **PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT ON THIS LIST!!** Joyful Hearts will be using a Thrivent Action Team gift card to purchase 25 backpacks. At the end of our collection period, Sunday, June 30th, we will box the items collected and deliver them to Colinas Del Norte, so they have them for the start of school.

Joyful Hearts will reconvene on Saturday, August 12th at 10am to discuss plans for a Church-wide Rummage Sale the group will be sponsoring. It is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, September 30th. The proceeds will be going to the COJ Solar Project/Memorial Committee and Joyful Hearts. It's not too early to set aside items you might want to donate. Please, no electronics, clothing, or bedding (mattresses/box springs). Details to follow.

Joyful Hearts Meeting—THERE WILL BE NO MEETINGS IN JUNE AND JULY!!

School Supplies for Colinas Del Norte Elementary School June 19th-July 30th, 2023



- Expo Dry Erase markers, wide tip (most said black, a few said color)
- Spiral Notebooks (wide ruled)
- Plastic pocket folders with prongs
- Plastic Sheet protectors (3-hole punch)
- Loose leaf paper – (wide ruled lined) and (graph)
- **Two-inch** 3 ring binders (any color)
- Glue sticks
- Crayons/Markers
- Colored pencils
- Tissues
- Lysol wipes

**PLEASE PURCHASE
SUPPLIES THAT ARE ON
THIS LIST!
THESE ARE ITEMS THAT
THE SCHOOL STAFF HAVE
SPECIFICALLY ASKED
FOR!**

Beyond Our Walls

Storehouse West

We are doing great with our drive-thru donations for Storehouse West. If you would like to donate, simply swing by the outside church entrance and drop off your **non-perishable** food donations in the cart.



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Boxed Cereal (cold)
 Crackers—saltines, club, wheat, any variety
 Mac & Cheese
 Canned tomatoes
 Hamburger Helper</p> | <p>Canned veggies
 Canned tuna or meat
 Canned fruit
 Pasta & sauce
 Canned pasta
 Sugar</p> | <p>Sugar Substitutes
 Coffee
 Dog/Cat food</p> |
|--|--|--|

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



The Storehouse West Kids Clothes Closet would appreciate donations of children's swimwear and boys baseball caps. These could be left with the food donations.

**Over 90 lbs. of food were delivered to Storehouse during the month of May.
 Thank you for your donations!
 Please continue to support Storehouse West and help feed our community.**

Joyful Hearts collecting toiletries for Albuquerque Healthcare for the Homeless

As you travel this summer, please remember to bring home travel-size personal care items for the hygiene kits distributed by Albuquerque **Healthcare for the Homeless**. Our friend Anita Cordova of ABQHCH reports that the need is great and our donations are much appreciated.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Needed Items:</u>
 Shaving supplies
 Deodorant (male and female)
 Lip balm</p> | <p>Sunscreen
 Travel size tissues
 Toothbrushes/toothpaste
 Band aids</p> |
|---|---|

For the hygiene kits, all items need to be smaller size to fit in a gallon Ziplock bag and NO mouthwash, please.

SERMON ON THE AMOUNTS

Giving for Year through April 30, 2023

Giving	Actual	Budget	Actual Giving more/(less) than Budget
Programs:	\$60,799.00	\$67,050.00	(\$6,251.00)
Building:	\$15,738.00	\$17,800.00	(\$2,062.00)
Both Funds:	\$76,537.00	\$84,850.00	(\$8,313.00)

Thank you for your faithful financial stewardship.

Pastor's Ponderings

Jesus and Immersion Learning

Continued from page 1

While I do not have the space in this article to speak in much depth or nuance on this experience, the main thing I want to emphasize is the power of experience itself. It is one thing to talk theoretically about "immigration issues". It is another to actually meet a mother and her adorable four-year-old daughter, who have walked thousands of miles over six months in order to find safety and build better lives. It is easy to dismiss the call of interesting ideas. But the call to love becomes much more real when you're staring at a living, breathing human being.



When given the choice between a faith of fancy theories and a faith of real experiences, Jesus pretty much always chose the latter. In fact, you could say that Jesus was an early proponent of immersion learning. Famously, he once told his disciples, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice. Now go and learn what this means." The lesson is clear: to really understand the heart of God, theories will not be enough. Rather we will need to *go and learn what this means* by allowing our faith to be immersed in the world.

The largest growing religious group in our country is "the nones", who self-identify as not belonging to any formal religious group. Famously, nones tend to resist anything they see as "organized religion." But what is interesting is that the majority of these folks also believe in God and consider themselves spiritual. It's just that many of them do not see the church as something that immerses them in a more loving and connected reality. Some of them even see religion mainly as a force of division.

While this view of the church is certainly not always true, unfortunately sometimes it is. Often we have created communities that look more like exclusive country clubs than open tables that welcome all. Often we have treated the faith more as a set of theological ideas than a call to love God and neighbor.

Of course, we're human and we will ever get things totally right as God's church. But I do know that we are at our best when we worry less about fancy theories and more about following Jesus in the way of grace. So let us all remember, theories of a loving God are a nice start, but what really matters is how we *go and learn what this means*. May we continue to build a faith together that is full of immersion learning!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Paul

We Need Volunteers!

If you would like to serve as a **Communion Assistant**, **Usher**, **Reader**, or be on the **Altar Guild**, please let Pr. Paul or the office know. We would be happy to train you if you have never volunteered before.



Community Connections



Christopher Tin

To Shiver the Sky

New Mexico Matinee Performance
Lentic Performing Arts Center
Sunday, June 18, 2023, at 3:00 PM
Santa Fe, NM

Southwest Premiere
Popejoy Hall
Saturday, June 17, 2023, at 7:30 PM
Albuquerque, NM

A New Mexico Premiere



Scan the QR code to buy your tickets now!