

# monthly connections

a publication of joy! lutheran church

## Joy! Highs and Lows

- ↑ Happy One Year Anniversary, Pastor Mark!
- ↑ 20 volunteers help build youth stage
- ↑ 65 coats donated to Jail Ministry
- ↑ Overall, huge outpouring in donated outerwear
- ↑ Through pledge cards, 2 additional volunteers for Youth Group, 1 for Worship Arts, 1 Special Events and 7 First Impressions
- ↑ As of 12/31, within 1% of budget
- ↓ Shortage of Children's Ministry volunteers

## Divorce Recovery - Finding Peace & Happiness

My name is Mary Jo Thorson and this January I published a book on divorce recovery; *Divorce Recovery - Finding Peace and Happiness*. I'm passionate about helping people who have been or are going through divorce because I've been there, too, and have seen God's restorative power at work. Over the last decade, I have been involved in divorce recovery by writing about it and leading divorce recovery groups. This book is jam-packed with Bible verses to help you through each stage you may be going through. Let me help you navigate through the stages of divorce recovery and help you move past these emotions to live a more peaceful life. You can find my book on Amazon - <http://goo.gl/bifpgK> or in our church library.



## If You Can't Say Something Nice

by Mark Borgetti, Lead Pastor

My mama said, "If you can't say nothing nice don't say nothing at all ...." Wish I had taken her advice.

The person screamed at me on the phone and I screamed back. The person told me I was not being Christ-like ... as he screamed at me. Laughable! I screamed louder. It got ugly. The phone call ended on a bad note. For a long time we never talked about it.

Dealing with conflict is difficult and exhausting. We would exchange cold and empty greetings when we ran into one another at church. The relationship was broken. And if I am going to be completely honest, I was not sure that I wanted to see it mended. I could easily demonize this person in my mind freeing me from any need to make amends. But I knew I needed to forgive this person AND ask to be forgiven.

Why? Because in my humble opinion, forgiveness is a non-negotiable between Christ followers. So I prayed and anguished. How could I simply say, "I'm sorry for my harsh words can you forgive me?" and let this person think they won! I struggled to find the right words to say. This took weeks and feedback from my trusted friend, Nick. Here's where I landed, "I would like to apologize for my contribution to the tension between us."

Before I tell you how this person received those words, let me rewind. I had been reading about conflict resolution in the church in Matthew 18:15-20. As I read a familiar verse seemed to appear from thin air.

Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Wait, this familiar verse was about Jesus showing up in the middle of broken relationships? Jesus promises to show up? I don't go alone? Is it possible that Jesus' divine power could soften our hearts and reconcile this relationship? I decided to put this scripture to the test.

So I said to that person, "I would like to apologize for my contribution to the tension between us." And ... Jesus showed up. Healing began. We even laughed at our own immaturity and, dare I say, we started to appreciate one another. Reconciliation becomes possible when Jesus shows up.

Join us Sundays in Lent for "Restored"; a series that will explore restoring our relationship with God and others.

## News from Council

by Laura Shabat

We are right on target for our budget for the first 6 months. Sue Gearica attended our meeting to give us an update on finances and where we will be going forward for the rest of our fiscal year.

We discussed collecting funds for El Salvador mission trip since there are 2 trips planned for this year. We will collect monies earlier in the year (Feb - Apr) and the team will decide on how to allocate funds.

Pastor Mark outlined his Leadership Development Plan, which provides opportunities for current leadership at Joy to apprentice/mentor others to take over small groups or ministries and/or create new ones.

Finally, we discussed and answered questions regarding Pastor Mark's annual review.



## Planning Ahead

- 2/6-2/8 ATF Retreat
- 2/18 7pm Ash Wednesday  
Worship Service
- 2/20-2/22 Crossroads Retreat
- 3/8 Youth Seminar
- 3/15 11:45am New Member  
Reception
- 3/29 11:45am Family Holy  
Week Activity
- 4/2 7pm Maundy Thursday  
Worship Service
- 4/3 7pm Good Friday Worship  
Service
- 4/5 7:30, 9 & 10:30am Easter  
Worship Services  
Easter Breakfast following  
all services
- 4/11 Youth Group Pizza  
Making
- 4/18 Women's Retreat
- 4/26 11:45am Baptism Class
- 5/1-5/2 Confirmation Retreat
- 5/3 10:30am Confirmation  
Worship Service  
11:45am First  
Communion Class
- 5/24 10:30am First  
Communion Worship Service
- 6/4-6/6 Rummage Sale
- 6/15-6/19 Vacation Bible  
School (VBS)
- 8/6-8/7 Willow Creek Global  
Leadership Summit

## Vacation Bible School (VBS)

Tentatively set for the week of  
June 15th-19th 9 am—noon

Children Ages 3 thru 5th grade

We are in the beginning stages  
of planning our outreach  
event!! We are in need of team  
leaders. Contact Cheryl O'Neill  
at cheryl.oneill@joylutheran.org  
for more information.

## The Next Step

Middle & High School Students  
Noon—2 pm

## Joy! Monthly Connections

### Saying Goodbye to Lifetree Café



It was Jan 27, 2013 and I was filled with pure excitement as we launched our first Lifetree Café at Joy! The topic was **Schindler's Youngest Survivor** and 55 people gathered at round tables to hear his story and tackle some thought provoking questions.

The buzz that was happening in our brand new Connections Café space and the relationships that were beginning during that first hour long LTC had me smiling ear to ear. You see, I love helping foster environments where relationships can be created or strengthened, but even more so, I love doing so with an amazing team surrounding me!

For the last two years I've literally had the pure privilege of working with 10 amazing & articulate hosts and 12 hospitable & loving friendship team members and a faithful record keeper that trusted a hopeful idea I had and helped make it a reality. They saw where the mission of Lifetree intersected with the mission of Joy! and it has been a wonderful ride for two solid years. Together, we have had the privilege of engaging in conversations with **120 different Joy! folks and 54 people from the community in our two years of programming! AND .....have shown 109 episodes!**

Lifetree's motto is **DOING LIFE, DOING GOOD** and this team sure has lived that out! This has been an act of love & faithfulness from each of them. They embraced the mission of this ministry along side of me and God has done work THROUGH them and ON them. Here are a few examples from some Lifetree Café team members...

**Rose Froseth** said serving at Lifetree Café "helped build confidence" in her public speaking skills, and encouraged her to step into roles she wouldn't have considered in the past.

by Jenelle Ancona, Relational Ministry Coordinator

**Kay Wilt** said the experience made her "more aware of being hospitable in general- looking for people who are by themselves or appear uncomfortable in a situation and making myself approach them."

**Ann Gallagher** (who was my right hand coordinator) commented that she knew from the beginning she wanted to be a part of this ministry team and loves how it has grown her relationship with, not only the team, but other Joy! members and eventually led to her taking a big step in her own faith journey by joining a small group that's she's thankful for.

**Kelly Glowinski** said, "Lifetree has given me the opportunity to meet and get to know Joy! members that I had never crossed paths with." "I have met a lot of good and really interesting people over the last couple of years and I've had the chance to hear how God works in the lives and in the hearts of these people, which has been a really cool thing"

**Talea Bloom** commented that serving here has helped her public speaking skills and has reminded her to keep inviting because you just never know who will show up and who will benefit!

**Frances Simons**, the host coordinator, said it "touched her heart to observe the raw and often emotional discussions participants were having" and "it was definitely worth the ride"

**Mark Froseth** loved learning about new topics and deepened relationships he made.

**Bob Lenning** shared how it helped improve his communication skills and learning to do so with passion.

To me, these stories are examples that when we take a leap of faith to serve, we in turn are personally blessed in a number of ways. God is faithful and doesn't waste any opportunity.

While Lifetree Café has run its course at Joy! we give much thanks and praise for the fruits of this ministry. I believe lives were changed. For some "Lifetree has become "a want to do" every Sunday evening - I have an awesome experience each time I

come". We've had people become Joy! members, move into small groups, find a "family" through Lifetree. Best of all, we've seen proof that a culture that welcomes your doubts and fears but trusts God will use it to build them up and strengthen the community, does work!

I am ever grateful for the two years of Sunday nights at Lifetree Cafe. My mind was expanded through the variety of topics and my heart was expanded by the relationships created and the opportunity to practice loving and accepting others. It's been a pleasure in every sense of the word to have lead this venture.

By the time this article is in print, we will have had our last episode (Jan. 25, 2015) - almost exactly two years from the start date. I thank you ,as a congregation, for supporting us. As we say at the end of each LTC episode "Thanks to all of you for joining us at Lifetree"

Please help us celebrate this ministry and its successes in worship on Sunday, **Feb 15th!**

## For Mission to Succeed, We Need You!

By Cheryl O'Neill,  
Director Children & Family Ministry

We need your help to make our Mission...to Welcome all children to experience the love of Jesus; Encourage... all parents to be the faith center of their home; and Guide...families to shine the light of Christ in their daily lives, a reality.

Are you Hungry? We feed you in more than one way! Join us for our next rotation workshop on February 8th following the 10:30am worship service for lunch. The Kid's Adventure Klub team feeds you the information, knowledge, and support you need to be able to easily nourish you and the children of Joy! with the word of God.

We are in need of volunteers to teach a specific lesson to a group of children on a given Sunday. God has blessed you with special gifts to share with His children!!! We need you...more importantly...YOUR child/ children need you! Have any questions? Stop by the Children's Desk in the Connections Café or contact Cheryl O'Neill, Director of Children & Family Ministry, by phone at 847.362.4569 or email Cheryl.oneill@joylutheran.org

## Joy! Using Thrivent Action Team Funds

by Kathe Swanson

Thrivent Financial for Christians rolled out a new program in the last quarter of 2014 to help its members "Live Generously" by providing seed money for fundraisers and help fund service projects. Many Thrivent members who are part of our awesome Joy! community, stepped up to the plate to lead these Thrivent Action Teams and we are off to a great start!! Here are a few examples of the way God is helping us use Thrivent's resources to grow our vision of helping others and share Christ's radical love with those in need, so that all are lives are changed!

**The Giving Tree** - The Amazing Grace small group used their \$250 Thrivent seed money to purchase a new pre-lit Christmas tree, skirt, and storage bag. Our Joy! Community chose tags from the tree & donated approximately \$7,100 worth of gifts to the children of One Hope United.

**Women's Christmas Dinner** - 60 women from Joy! gathered for fun, fellowship and spiritual renewal at this annual event. These generous women donated 364 pairs of panties and 22 bras to "A Safe Place". \$250 in Thrivent Action Team funds were used to purchase an additional 50 bras to donate to this wonderful women's & children's shelter.

**PADS** - 20 women from the small group, Tuesday Morning, along with their spouses and kids, formed a Thrivent Action team, using their \$250 seed money to purchase food & clothing for approx. 70 guests. Donations included: 23 pairs P.J's, 10+ pairs leggings, 59 pairs sweats, 4 pairs thermal underwear, and 10 duffel bags.

**College Cares** - Parents donated lots of goodies ranging from home-made cookies, brownies, Rice Krispie treats, candy and gum to chips, Mac-n-cheese, granola bars and pudding cups. The \$250 seed money was used to purchase boxes & packing supplies and helped cover the postage to send over 40 care package to college students.

**ATF** - Our high school youth along with their advisors formed a Thrivent Action Team and headed downtown over their Christmas break to become "Jesus with skin on". They shared Christ's radical love with many of the homeless people they met on the streets of Chicago by bringing them home-made lunches, warm hats, scarves, gloves and shoes. They used their \$250 Thrivent seed money to purchase (4) rolling duffel bags to transport the clothing, lunches and shoes.

**Quilt Ministry** - Our team of 25 Joy! Quilters used their \$250 in Thrivent Action Team funds to purchase 45 yards of fabric which they will transform into 15 beautiful quilts to add to their quilt ministry.

We would love to see Joy! lead the pack in the number of action teams created. Please contact your Thrivent congregational advocates, Kathe Swanson (katheswan@msn.com) or Andy Arnold (andyarnold218@hotmail.com) if you would like more information about forming your own Thrivent Action team. We have a list of 100 ideas for your service projects or fundraisers. Every Thrivent member has the opportunity to lead two action teams per year and receive \$250 in seed money for each project.

A Thrivent benefit member has some type of product with Thrivent Financial and their family members living under the same roof without any financial products are considered associate members. If you or your family member don't have any financial products with Thrivent Financial, you can become an associate member for a \$20 membership fee.

Joy! is excited to offer Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University program again this spring. Classes will meet on Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:00PM starting March 1st. This is a 9-week program. We will meet every Sunday except Easter.



### What is Financial Peace University?

FPU is the most important step to changing your financial future. It is your Total Money Makeover Program. It takes the knowledge from God and turns it into real action in our lives through a step-by-step process taught by best-selling author and financial counselor Dave Ramsey.

FPU is a 9-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make the right money decisions to achieve your financial goals and God's plan for your life. The course includes practical lessons on eliminating debt, building wealth, giving like never before, and much, much more!

### Who is Financial Peace University for?

It's for EVERYONE!...from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Over 1 million families and individuals have attended Financial Peace University. Applying God's Word radically changes your life. On average, FPU graduates have paid off over \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 during the 91-day program!

### What is the cost?

\$100 per family - 9 lessons, workbook, Dave Ramsey's book, audio CDs, video access and online budgeting tools.

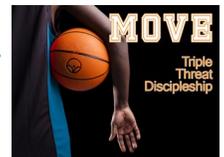
### Who do I contact to sign up?

Sign up at the Kiosk or contact Cheryl McCumber @ badgerfamily5@comcast.net for more information.

## Stewardship Wrap Up

by Michael Hood

Back in the fall, Joy! kicked off our annual pledge drive called "MOVE - Triple Threat Discipleship". Over the weeks we used various sports analogies, such as the basketball player who can dribble, pass, and shoot being referred to as a triple threat. As discussed in various sermons along the way, for us a triple threat is realized by the giving of our time, talent, and treasure. Your generous pledge reflects your commitment to make a MOVE and get in the game. As the following statistics illustrate, Team Joy! is rising to new heights as we develop into the best team we can be:



### Triple Threat Results as of 1/15/15

Cumulative General Fund Pledges—\$467,856 (up 13% from 2014)  
 Cumulative New Building Fund Pledges—\$8,620  
 # of Households Pledging Time, Talent and/or Treasure—119  
 (increase of 19 pledges)  
 % of Households Pledging Time, Talent and/or Treasure—37% (based on 320 households)

Remember that our game is ongoing, as there are ways to contribute to the three areas of giving throughout the year. If you have yet to pledge, there is still time! Please contact Sue Gearica at sue.gearica@joylutheran.org.

While our individual giving is tremendous, the true power is found when the combined impact of Team Joy! is unleashed. Thank you for your thoughtful giving, now let's go out there and win!



by Colin Cranmer, Youth Director  
colin.cranmer@joylutheran.org

We've been busy over here and it's just getting more exciting. Here's the quick down low on what's coming up for us and the different ways you can help out, whether or not you have kiddos:

Our Mission trip this year is a construction trip to Charlotte, New York to help fix houses for people in need. We're really excited...but it is an expensive trip, especially for families that have more than one student going. If you feel inclined to help share the costs of taking our students out there for this life-changing experience, please consider buying some pizzas from our Pizza Fundraiser! Delivery day is April 12th, and we'll be starting to take orders over the next few weeks. If pizza isn't your thing, our garage sale is coming up in the early days of June, and we could really use your old junk, knick knacks and whoosits to sell. Save your stuff! Alternately, we do have a scholarship fund for kids who need financial assistance for our winter retreats and mission trips, so if you want to help a kid experience God in a new way and are blessed with some extra cash, this is a fantastic way to help and is really meaningful for our kids. Our scholarship fund has been a huge blessing, and each year we've been able to send kids who otherwise would have missed out.

We also have our Winter Retreats coming up for High School (February 6th-8th in Ewart, Michigan) and Middle School (February 20th-22nd at Camp Timberlee). This will be a blast, don't miss out!!

Confirmation Weekend is May 1st-2nd and the kids will be Confirmed Sunday the 3rd. If you have an 8th grader, mark your calendars!

As most people around here know, our high schoolers have really made serving the homeless in Chicago their project. These events are the ones that kids bring their friends to, and we consistently have about 30 kids going downtown each time we go. One of the things that we've noticed on these trips is that while we're giving out socks and shirts, the shoes on folks are barely held together. For the new year, the kids have decided that they want to help make a dent in a very real problem...how do we get shoes, organize them, transport them, and figure out how to get people the size and type that they need? So, starting next week, we are beginning to go through our shoe closets for gently used sneakers and boots, and we hope you will join us! We need shoes! Thrivent has also generously donated rolling bags for us to use for transporting them down, so we're well on our way to being able to get shoes to people who need them!

We also need help building shelving in the Power House basement to store the shoes. Got the hankering to build some shelves? Shoot me an email, colin.cranmer@joylutheran.org, we can use all the hands available!

So, as you can tell, we're busy over here, but I'm so proud of the kids and their hearts for those around them. These guys are awesome! High five the nearest kid you see!

## **PADS Ministry Update**

by Cathy Kramer

We are in our fourth month of serving PADS at Shepherd of the Lakes Church. You've all made a huge positive impact on many homeless people by providing a safe, warm and welcoming environment. Thanks to the Small Groups Godfelas, Joy Staff, and Tuesday Morning Bible Study for serving delicious home cooked meals!

In December we received a private donation as well as a donation from Thrivent to purchase and distribute a variety of Christmas gifts of backpacks, sweatpants, fleece pants and duffel bags. The Joy! community also donated warm clothing throughout the entire month to be distributed and it certainly made a huge impact! Tuesday Morning Small Group baked Christmas Cookies to add to the festivities.

Homelessness is on the rise, especially with Children. We have been providing shelter to an average of 70 Clients each week, 15 are Children.

Your continual support in volunteering and donations of food and clothing items has made this ministry the success it is. If you have extra blankets or comforters (twin or full size) please let us take them off your hands! Leave any donations by the main entrance in the bin marked "PADS".

## **Hard Times at COOL**

by Becky Valenta

COOL Ministries has recently suffered some financial issues and has had to cut down on staff, utilizing more volunteers and focusing on more fund-raising events. So, COOL needs our help now more than ever in 2015.

COOL continues to follow their mission of providing for the people in Lake County that need assistance with food and housing; reporting they provided food to about 71,000 people during the 2014. That number is astounding! COOL has a Family Housing Program and during 2014 they assisted 57 individuals with housing.

Lake County is one of the wealthiest counties in the U.S. so these statistics are amazing to say the least. Joy! has always been a big supporter of COOL, and we recently had a very successful Thanksgiving food drive, by contributing \$1850 to purchase \$20 Holiday Gift Dinner Boxes that fed a family of four. Our church fed holiday meals to 92 families!

Moving forward, here's what we can do: 1. Keep COOL Ministries in our prayers! Continue to donate food and money each month. There's a "food of the month", that we'll notify you about in the newsletter and bulletins. Any donations of food or money are always welcome. Monetary donations can be left in the Offering plate during worship or dropped off at the Info Center. Please leave food donations by the main entrance of Joy!

For more information or questions, please contact Becky Valenta at 847-752-8898 or beckilito@gmail.com.

## **New Fellowship Opportunity**

**Tables of Eight** is a simple premise – 8 people sharing a meal together, once a month for 4 months. Then reshuffle the groups so you get to know others in the Joy! community. Open to all in pairs of 2, but certainly not necessary to be couples. The hosting pair for the month will name the cuisine or theme for the evening, and prepare the main dish. Then one pair will bring an appetizer, one pair a side dish, one pair a desert. BYOB or hosts provide beverages – the groups will decide that among themselves. Groups will also decide the dates for each of the meals.

There will be 2 sessions per year, and pairs can join for a 4-month session (and then opt in and out of future sessions as they choose).

Session 1: Sept, Oct Nov, & January  
Session 2: Feb, March, April & May

Tables of Eight is launching in February! If you are interested in participating in this food and fellowship opportunity, or if you would like more information, please contact Gail Padmanabhan, 847-772-9774 or via Facebook by Feb 8.

## **New in the Nursery**

We would like to welcome Kaitlynn Camardo to our Joy! Nursery Staff!!! Kaitlynn was hired the beginning of January, and we are so excited that she is sharing her gifts with our little ones at Joy! Below is a word from Kaitlynn:

*Hi, my name is Kaitlynn Camardo. I am very excited to work in the Nursery with the children and families at JOY! I am very excited to be able to watch the nursery children grow and learn, as well as have fun and play with friends they may meet here at JOY!*

*I love working with younger children, it is so fun to watch them grow and expand their experiences developmentally. I have about 4 years of experience with younger children as more of a nanny! I also have an Infant and Toddler Specialist Certificate from CLC, I will have my A.A.S. Degree in Early Childhood Education this May 2015, and I plan on getting my B.A. in birth through second grade.*

*In my spare time I like to spend time with my Mom, my dog, Diamond and my boyfriend, John. I am very kind hearted and outgoing, and I look forward to meeting all the children and families at JOY!*

Please stop by the Nursery during the 9:00 service and welcome our newest staff member!

## **Joy! Lutheran Church**

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