



Dear Joy,

Some days I have no idea what I'm doing. That seems like a good place to start this first letter for a brand-new year. Because after two pandemic years of trying to figure out how to lead and preach and teach and gather, not to mention Zooming and podcasting, there are still days I stare at a blank computer screen and wonder what I could say that might inspire you, or challenge you, or at the very least assure you that things are bound to "normalize" soon.

In reality, I have no clue when things will start to feel normal. Which, now that I think about it, IS pretty normal for us at Joy. For our entire life (2 years on April 1, 2022) we have been in a constant state of change, some of that change was by choice, but a lot of it was by pandemic.

And now, add Mary Pollock, our Office Administrator, to the mix. Mary has been diagnosed with a brain tumor and is under the care of doctors at Region's Hospital in St. Paul, MN. She will begin treatment soon, likely in the next week or two. So, things will change again... because no matter how much training we, the rest of the staff, have on how to run the copy machine or print bulletins or leaders' guides, or update the Breeze calendar and membership information, or keep track of everything, all the time... we aren't Mary. No one comes close to working the kind of magic she does. Believe me, you'll know it.

So, here's the word of assurance; Joy is used to change, it's who we are. So, as we begin another weird pandemic year, and Mary receives treatment for the brain tumor, let's cling to the promise of Immanuel, "God with us", that we are not alone. That is an unchanging promise from God who loves us.

PEACE TO YOU IN THE CHANGE,

Pastor Angie

Happening in January

SUN, JAN 9

- **9:20-9:50am FAITH5 Family** - families meet in the Sanctuary
- **10am Worship with Holy Communion** - we will choose Star Words!

WED, JAN 12

- **1:30pm** WELCA Gather Bible Study

THUR, JAN 13 - 7:00pm Council Meeting

SUN, JAN 16

- **9:20-9:50am FAITH5 Family** - families meet in the Sanctuary
- **10am Worship with Holy Communion**

TUE, Jan 18 6:30pm Joy W/ELCA Meeting

WED, Jan 19 - 6:30pm *The Alchemist* Book Discussion. All are welcome! Book available at Milltown Public Library.

SUN, JAN 23

- **9:20-9:50am FAITH5 Family** - families meet in the Sanctuary
- **10am Worship with Holy Communion**

SUN, JAN 30

- **9:20-9:50am FAITH5 Family** - families meet in the Sanctuary
- **10am Worship with Holy Communion**

MONDAYS - 5:30pm NA Meeting, **5:30pm** Beginners Ukulele Group

WEDNESDAYS (12th, 19th, 26th) - Confirmation & High School Youth Group Meeting Night

5:30pm Supper for all | **6-7pm** Confirmation or High School Youth Group

Mark your calendars: **Sunday, February 13th - Annual Meeting** in the Fellowship Hall after worship.

Stay tuned for details about "**Lutheran 101**" coming soon.

What's the big deal about: grace? baptism? communion? the Bible?

Registration information will be available shortly. You will receive an email and details will be posted to our website and Facebook.