

# JOYFUL NEWS

## LUTHERAN February 2026

### JOY LUTHERAN CHURCH

PO Box 217  
501 State Road 35  
Centuria, WI 54824  
715.646.2357  
joylutheranwi.org

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday | 8:00am – 11:00am  
Tuesday | 10:30am – 1:30pm  
Thursday | 9:00am – 3:00pm

### PASTOR

**Angela Kutney**

715.222.7916  
angkutney@gmail.com

### OFFICE ADMIN

**Meg Anderson**

715.501.6648  
office@joylutheranwi.org

### MEDIA & MARKETING

**Deanna Wheeler**

deanna@joylutheranwi.org

### YOUTH MINISTER

**Heather Zimmer**

heather@joylutheranwi.org



## Reflection | When the World Feels Unsteady

By Megan Anderson

In the absence of Pastor Angie this month, these words come from our Office Administrator – offered with care, humility, and deep love for this community.

Some days it feels like the world is holding its breath.

The news carries so much – war and violence, division and fear, grief layered upon grief. It can feel overwhelming, even disorienting, as though the ground beneath us is less steady than it once was. Many of us are carrying not only the weight of global events, but also personal worries and quiet struggles that never make the headlines.

As a church rooted in faith and witness, we do not pretend that brokenness is new – or that faith shields us from it. Our faith is a tradition that tells the truth: the world is fractured, and so are we. And still, we trust in a God who meets us not in perfection, but in grace.

We gather week after week around Word and Sacrament, not because everything is resolved, but because God promises to show up right in the midst of unresolved things.

We believe that Christ is present in ordinary places – in shared prayers, in familiar hymns, in conversations over coffee, in acts of quiet care that rarely draw attention.

Hope, for us, is not denial or naive optimism. It is resurrection hope. It is the steady conviction that God is still at work, even when the news tells us otherwise. It is the freedom to serve our neighbors, seek justice, and care for creation – not because we can fix everything, but because love is still our calling.

In a time when so much feels uncertain, I am grateful for a community that continues to show up for one another with compassion, honesty, and grace. May we keep holding space for lament and for trust, for questions and for faith, confident that God walks with us through all of it.

Even now. Even here.

# The Happenings | February 2026

## WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Mon, Tues, Thurs, and Fri – 6:00am to 1:00pm Meals on Wheels | **Monday – 3:00pm** Good Neighbor Ukulele Group  
Tuesday – 10:30am Staff Meeting | **Wednesday – 10:00am to 12:00pm** JOYful Quilting Ministry

### Sunday February 1st

9:15am Faith5 Family and Fellowship Fellowship Host: Joy Council  
10:00am Worship w/ Holy Communion

### Wednesday February 4th

6:00pm Youth Dinner  
6:30pm Confirmation and High School Youth Group

### Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup>

9:00am to 11:00am Threads of Joy Fiber Arts Group

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### Sunday February 8<sup>th</sup>

9:15am Faith5 Family and Fellowship  
10:00am Worship w/ Holy Communion Cardin / Thompson Baptisms  
5:00pm Sober Bowl Party Partners in Recovery Event hosted with Joy Lutheran Church

### Monday February 9<sup>th</sup>

11:00am Grace in Grief Support Group  
6:00pm Grace in Grief Support Group  
Lent Cross-Stitch Registration Deadline

### Tuesday February 10th

6:30pm Council Meeting *this meeting may be re-scheduled to a later date – Council Members will be notified of change*

### Wednesday February 11<sup>th</sup>

1:30pm Gather Bible Study  
5:30pm Vocal Choir Practice  
6:00pm Youth Dinner  
6:30pm Confirmation and High School Youth Group

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### Sunday February 15<sup>th</sup>

9:15am Faith5 Family and Fellowship Fellowship Host: JOYful Quilting Ministry Brunch following Worship  
10:00am Worship w/ Holy Communion  
Congregational Annual Meeting following Worship  
Lent Meditation Registration Deadline

### Tuesday February 17<sup>th</sup>

5:00pm Recovering Together Cafe  
6:30pm to 8:00pm Windows to Wonder Lent Cross-Stitch

### Wednesday February 18<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday

6:00pm Gather Bible Study  
6:00pm Lenten Supper hosted by Sunshine Committee  
6:30pm Confirmation and High School Youth Group  
7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service The Voice of Satan  
Newsletter Deadline

### Saturday February 21st

9:00am to 11:00am JOYful Spourts Tot-Time and Fellowship Group

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### Sunday February 22<sup>nd</sup>

9:15am Faith5 Family and Fellowship  
9:15am Breakfast Club High School Youth  
10:00am Worship w/ Holy Communion Schleusner Baptism

### Wednesday February 25<sup>th</sup>

5:30pm Vocal Choir Practice  
6:00pm to 7:00pm LPBC Registration Event w/ JOYful Hands Members can attend LPBC for FREE in 2026 if they sign up with JOYful Hands during this event  
6:00pm Lenten Supper hosted by JOYful Hands  
6:30pm Confirmation and High School Youth Group  
7:00pm Lenten Worship Service The Voice of Judas  
7:30pm JYLT Meeting

### Thursday February 26<sup>th</sup>

6:30pm to 8:00pm Lenten Meditation



## GRACE IN GRIEF



A COMFORT CIRCLE OF COMPASSION AND HEALING  
2nd Monday of each month at 11:00am & 6:00pm

YOU ARE WELCOME - JUST AS YOU ARE

EPIPHANY STAR WORDS - PICK A STAR WORD AND REFLECT ON YOUR WORD, THEN SUBMIT YOUR DEVOTIONAL TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY 11/29/26. ALL AGES CAN JOIN IN!



## Star Words

We are putting together a devotional, written by you, our congregation! You are invited to ponder the significance the word you chose might have in your life and how God might be speaking to you through one simple word.



## Threads of Joy FiberArts Group

THREADS OF JOY MEETS THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

Bring along any excess supplies you have to trade or share with others. Whether you're giving, swapping, or just connecting, all are welcome!

Threads of Joy is a welcoming fellowship at Joy Lutheran Church for anyone who enjoys knitting, crocheting, cross-stitch, embroidery, or other fiber arts. Whether you're a beginner or experienced crafter, bring your current project and enjoy a relaxed time of creativity, conversation, and community. We gather to share skills, encourage one another, and build friendships—one stitch at a time. All are welcome!

MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 15<sup>TH</sup>

## Communion Class All ages!



Class starts at 11:30am, beginning with a light lunch. Class will finish by 1pm.

Youth should have a guardian attending with them.

We will make communion cups on March 1st and communion bread on March 15th.

First Communion will be on Maundy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm

REGISTER HERE: [BIT.LY/COMMUNIONCLASS2026](https://bit.ly/communionclass2026)



SCAN HERE

## Custodial Coverage Course

Interested in helping care for our church building?

We're offering a brief custodial coverage course after worship on:

**February 8 and February 22.**

The goal is to build a list of trained custodial substitutes who can step in as needed. No prior experience required—just a willingness to help!

If you're interested, please plan to attend one (or both) sessions or contact the church office for more information.

## BREAKFAST CLUB

High School Youth

9:15AM  
Sundays

January 25  
February 22  
March 8  
April 26



CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING

**Sunday,  
February 15th  
following  
worship**

**with Joyful Quilters  
serving brunch**



MEETS THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

\*\*This playgroup is a ministry of our church, grounded in faith and fellowship. Parents and caregivers are required to stay onsite with their children.\*\*

JOYFUL SPROUTS IS A WELCOMING PLAY AND FELLOWSHIP GROUP AT JOY LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR CHILDREN FROM NEWBORN THROUGH KINDERGARTEN AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

THIS RELAXED GATHERING OFFERS A SAFE, JOYFUL SPACE FOR LITTLE ONES TO PLAY, EXPLORE, AND GROW WHILE PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS CONNECT AND BUILD COMMUNITY.

THROUGH PLAYTIME, CONVERSATION, AND SHARED MOMENTS, JOYFUL SPROUTS NURTURES FRIENDSHIPS FOR BOTH CHILDREN AND ADULTS AS WE GROW TOGETHER IN JOY.

OLDER SIBLINGS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND AS WELL. ALL FAMILIES ARE WELCOME!

## SHOP OUR STORE

Joy Lutheran Church will receive  
a portion of each purchase.



[bit.ly/joybonfireshop](https://bit.ly/joybonfireshop)



Check back! New products added as they become available.



### WINDOWS TO WONDER CROSS STITCH

Tuesday, February 17th  
6:30pm-8:00pm  
Cost: \$20 per person

REGISTER by February 9th  
[bit.ly/cross-stitch-lent](https://bit.ly/cross-stitch-lent)



### LENTEN MEDITATION SERIES

Thursdays Feb 26<sup>th</sup> & Mar 19<sup>th</sup>  
6:30pm-8:00pm  
Cost: \$5 per person

REGISTER by February 15  
[bit.ly/lentmeditation26](https://bit.ly/lentmeditation26)



## LENTEN EVENTS

### BOOK STUDY

*Entering The Passion of Jesus*  
by Amy-Jill Levine

Book Cost: \$9.50 (or order your own)

**Tuesdays,  
March 3, 17, & 31  
6:30pm - 8:00pm**

### COMMUNION CLASS

**Following Worship:  
March 1st & 15th**

REGISTER:  
[bit.ly/communionclass26](https://bit.ly/communionclass26)

**First Communion:  
Maundy Thursday, April 2nd at 7:00pm**





**SOBER BOWL SUNDAY**

**FEB 8, 2026 5:00 PM**

**JOY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**501 STATE RD 35 CENTURIA, WI 54824**

**FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT FOR  
PEOPLE IN RECOVERY!**

# IT'S GAME TIME!

**FREE and OPEN to the Public**  
**Join us for FOOD, FUN, and Fellowship**

**Games, Prizes, & Giveaways**  
**Kids Activities and Supervision**

**Text or Call Lora for Questions**  
**715-417-8843**

**Hosted by Joy Lutheran Church**  
**in partnership with**  
**We Support Recovery**

**Want to hear about upcoming sober events?**  
**Join the Recovery Text List!**  
**Text the word CONNECT to 715-641-4626**





# LENT 2026

## The Trials of Jesus | A Series of Special Services for Lent

*Like a courtroom drama, a series of witness comes forward to give testimony about their experiences with the accused – Jesus Christ. Through their accounts we come to know the truth, that Jesus came to take our place in the defendant's chair. Services include dramatic monologues, thematic hymns, prayers and children's messages that bear evidence to the fact that Jesus truly is the Son of God.*

### Ash Wednesday | The Voice of Satan – Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus faces temptation in the wilderness.

### Week 1 | The Voice of Judas – Mark 14:16,32-42

Jesus' betrayer defends him.

### Week 2 | The Voice of Annas – John 18:12-24

A chief priest discusses Jesus' arrest.

### Week 3 | The Voice of Caiaphas – Matthew 26:57-68

The high priest faces off with the Son of God.

### Week 4 | The Voice of Peter – Luke 22:54-62

Jesus' bold disciple speaks of his weak faith.

### Week 5 | The Voice of Herod – Luke 23:1-12

One king of the Jews testifies against another.

#### 02/18 Ash Wednesday

**6:00pm** Dinner

**7:00pm** Worship

#### 02/25-03/25

**6:00-7:00pm** Dinner & Class

**7:00-7:30pm** Worship

#### 03/29 Palm Sunday

**9:00am** Breakfast

**10:00am** Worship

#### 04/02 Maundy Thursday

**6:00pm** Dinner

NOTE: all church potluck  
([bit.ly/potluckdinners2026](https://bit.ly/potluckdinners2026))

**7:00pm** Worship w/First Communion

#### 04/03 Good Friday

**7:00pm** Worship

#### 04/05 Easter Sunday

**10:00am** Worship

LENT & HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

## NEW GROUPS AT JOY



### **Threads of Joy – Fiber Arts Group**

Threads of Joy is a welcoming fellowship at Joy Lutheran Church for anyone who enjoys knitting, crocheting, cross-stitch, or other fiber arts. Whether you're a beginner or experienced crafter, bring your current project and enjoy a relaxed time of creativity, conversation, community (and COFFEE!) We gather to share skills, encourage one another, and build friendships – one stitch at a time. All are welcome!

**Threads of Joy meets THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH.**

*Bring along any excess supplies you have to trade or share with others. Whether you're giving, swapping or just connecting, all are welcome!*

### **JOYful Sprouts – Play and Fellowship Group**

JOYful Sprouts is a welcoming play and fellowship group at Joy Lutheran Church for children from newborn through Kindergarten and their caregivers. This relaxed gathering offers a safe, joyful space for littles ones to play, explore, and grow while parents and caregivers connect and build community. Through playtime, conversation, and shared moments, JOYful Sprouts nurtures friendships for both children and adults as we grow together in joy! **Older siblings are welcome to attend as well! All families are welcome!**

**JOYful Sprouts meets THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH.**

*This playgroup is a ministry of our church, grounded in faith and fellowship. Parents and caregivers are required to stay onsite with their children.*



Would you like to play in the **Adult Handbell Choir**? If you can read music and attend practices approximately twice a month on **Wednesday's at 5:30pm**, we invite you to join us. Please contact Sheryl Kieselhorst at: [kieselhorst@live.com](mailto:kieselhorst@live.com) for more information or to get signed up.

## JOYful Hands (WELCA)

### **JOYful Hands (WELCA) Meeting Highlights – January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

- Carol's devotions: Dear You, TRUST ME. I have EVERYTHING under control. – Jesus Christ
- Information is being prepared for a Luther Point Campership Sign-Up night in March. Any member of JOY may attend camp with the enrollment costs covered
- Quilter's Brunch on February 15<sup>th</sup> after service, during the Annual Meeting. Thanks to donation of supplies to the JOYful Quilters
- If interested in attending the ELCA Triennial in Des Moines, please see Carol Johnson
- Apple River Conference Spring Gathering will be April 18<sup>th</sup>; Fall Gathering September 12<sup>th</sup>
- Cookie Walk proceeds of \$444 were sent to ELCA Good Gifts Program
- November Fellowship proceeds were sent to ELCA Educational Ministry
- Feed My Neighbor Food Pantry Needs currently are: toiletries, baking mixes, or cash donations
- Lenten Suppers will be Wednesday evenings beginning February 25<sup>th</sup> with JOYful Hands serving a baked potato bar

A joyful moment from our **JOYful Quilters** Christmas Party – laughter, friendship, and the warmth of community stitched together as beautifully as their quilts.

Pictured (left to right): Sandy Christensen, Sarah Campbell, Kathie Wilson, Nancy Glaim, Linda Appelholm, Margot Nelson, Pam Livingston, and Lynne Schauls.



## Custodial Coverage Course

Interested in helping care for our church building? We're offering a brief custodial coverage course after worship on:  
**February 8<sup>th</sup> and February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

The goal is to build a list of trained custodial substitutes who can step in as needed. No prior experience required – just a willingness to help! If you're interested, please plan to attend one (or both) sessions or contact the church office for more information. This course will be led by Brian Chryst, Joy Lutheran Custodian.

# Youth Education



## CONFIRMATION

*If Unity School District cancels / closes for inclement weather, we will not have programming.*

On February 18<sup>th</sup> we enter the Season of Lent. The Confirmation Wednesday night program schedule remains the same. The Lenten Worship services **are a part of the Confirmation programming and curriculum** and students and families should plan to attend these Worship Services together.

## FIRST COMMUNION – Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup> and Sunday March 15<sup>th</sup>

*Class is open to all ages! Youth should have a guardian attending with them.*

First Communion classes will begin at 11:30 a.m. and include a light lunch, concluding by 1:00 p.m.

March 1 – Make communion cups

March 15 – Make communion bread

First Communion will be celebrated on Maundy Thursday, April 2, during worship at 7:00 p.m.



Please reach out with any questions—we look forward to this meaningful season of learning and preparation together.

# Adult Education



## CROSS STITCHING A LENTEN JOURNEY – Windows to Wonder

Windows to Wonder invites you into a slow, meaningful way of experiencing Lent through both prayer and creativity. Guided by Pastor Angie, this cross-stitch project follows the unfolding faith journey of Nicodemus in the Gospel of John, revealing a beautiful stained-glass window design one section at a time throughout the Lenten season.

We will gather on **Tuesday February 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm to 8:00pm at Joy Lutheran Church** to receive your kit, share a short devotion, and get started together.

**Registration is required by Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$20 per person.**

**Register online at: [bit.ly/WindowsToWonder](https://bit.ly/WindowsToWonder) or contact the office**

Join us for a creative, contemplative Lenten experience – one thread, one prayer, one window of wonder at a time.

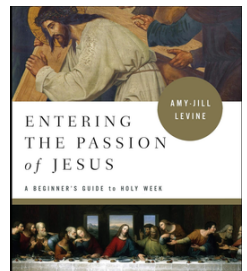
## LENT 2026 BOOK STUDY with PASTOR ANGIE – Entering The Passion of Jesus

Join Pastor Angie this Lent for a book study on *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week* by Amy-Jill Levine. Together, we'll explore the risks Jesus and his followers took during Holy Week – and what those stories mean for our faith today.

We'll read the book individually and gather for discussion on:

**Tuesdays, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup> from 6:30pm to 8:00pm at Joy Lutheran Church.**

Books are available through local libraries, Amazon, or by contacting Pastor Angie (paperback approx. \$9.50). All are welcome!



## JOURNEY THROUGH LENT – A Sacred Path of Renewal

Journey Through Lent, led by Deanna Wheeler, is a two-part meditative gathering inviting you to slow down and inhabit the Lenten season through Scripture, guided meditation, gentle breath prayer, and quiet reflection. Rooted in the Gospel of John, these evenings offer a calm, welcoming space for prayer, listening, and spiritual renewal – without pressure of performance.

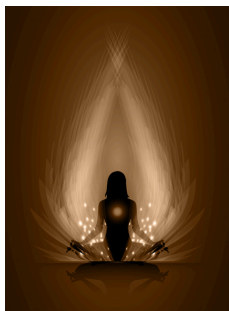
**Session 1 – February 26<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm to 8:00pm at Joy Lutheran Church**

**Session 2 – March 19<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm to 8:00pm at Joy Lutheran Church**

**Registration is required by Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$5 per person.**

**Register online at: [bit.ly/JourneyThroughLent2026](https://bit.ly/JourneyThroughLent2026)**

Join us for one or both sessions. All are welcome.



*If you have questions about education opportunities at Joy, or would like to share a recommendation, please reach out the Pastor Angie or the Church Office. Stay tuned, more opportunities are always being added!*



# **DID YOU KNOW that youth can receive Camperships for Luther Point Bible Camp from JOYful Hands?**

On February 25th, JOYful Hands will be helping families (who are members of Joy) sign up for camp during our Lenten dinner from 6:00-7:00pm.



**to view camp options visit  
[www.lutherpoint.org](http://www.lutherpoint.org)**



**Camperships from JOYful Hands cover 100% of the Early Bird registration cost.**

This means your child can attend camp at no cost to your family when registered early.

**Questions? Please contact Heather, Melinda or Elizabeth.**



# Feed My Neighbor | Community Food Pantry

Together We Can Make a Difference

**Current Needs:** Shampoo, Soap, Deodorant and Baking Supplies  
*Drop off at Church – Shopping Cart in Narthex*

Monetary donations designated to Feed My Neighbor Food Pantry can be dropped off at church during office hours or placed in your regular giving envelope during Worship.

## Ways to Serve at Joy | Volunteer Opportunities

Follow the links provided to sign-up online! You can also sign-up by contacting the office.



### RECURRING OPPORTUNITIES

#### WORSHIP ASSISTANT

**Acolyte:** Light candles at the beginning of service, help with communion, extinguish candles at end of service.

**Reader:** Read lessons for the day. Readings will be sent to you via email to practice and a printed copy will be available on the lectern.

**Usher/Greeter:** Greet people, hand out bulletins, dismiss rows for communion, advise Pastor of those needing communion in their seat, take attendance.

Sign-up Online at: [bit.ly/JoyWorshipAssistant](http://bit.ly/JoyWorshipAssistant)

#### FELLOWSHIP HOST

Provide treats and beverages on Sunday mornings during the fellowship hour.

Sign-Up Online at: [bit.ly/JoyFellowshipHost](http://bit.ly/JoyFellowshipHost)

#### WEDNESDAY NIGHTS: YOUTH DINNER

Sign-Up to host Wednesday night dinner for Confirmation and High School Youth Group. Dinner should be ready by 5:30pm. Hosts can use the church kitchen and come anytime to prepare their meal, as needed. Paper plates, cups, silverware, and Kool-Aid and Lemonade are available for use. Dinners hosts should plan to feed 25 people and make enough for seconds!

Sign-Up Online at: [bit.ly/JoyWednesdayDinner](http://bit.ly/JoyWednesdayDinner)

### UPCOMING NEEDS

#### SOBER BOWL – the BIG game!

**Serving on February 8<sup>th</sup>**

Sign-Up Online at: [bit.ly/SoberBowl2026](http://bit.ly/SoberBowl2026)

#### LENTEN DINNER HOST – YOUTH and FAMILIES

**Serving on March 25<sup>th</sup>**

Sign-Up Online at: [bit.ly/LentenSupperYouthFamilies](http://bit.ly/LentenSupperYouthFamilies)

#### MAUNDY THURSDAY POTLUCK

**Serving on April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Sign-Up Online at: [bit.ly/MaundyThursday2026](http://bit.ly/MaundyThursday2026)

**Your time, talents, and financial gifts help meet both the daily physical needs and the spiritual well-being of our community.**

SCAN HERE >

to share your time and talents



SCAN HERE >

follow prompts on your screen to give



## Giving Report



	December	Year to Date
Income	\$ 22,379.10	\$ 228,327.03
Expenses	\$ 19,277.73	\$ 233,133.10
Difference	\$ 3,101.37	\$ (4,806.07)

If you would like to receive approved council minutes or congregational financial reports please contact the office.

Call (715) 646-2357 or Email [office@joylutheranwi.org](mailto:office@joylutheranwi.org)





### **Donations Needed for Youth Snack Shack!**

We're looking for snack donations such as Sour Patch Kids, candy bars, Starburst, chips—anything is appreciated!  
The kids purchase these items, and all funds raised go directly back into the youth fund.  
Thank you for supporting our youth!

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### **VENDING MACHINE WANTED!**

We are currently in search of an affordable vending machine. If you have a machine to donate, know of one available at a reasonable cost, or have helpful leads, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you. We are only looking for a drink machine at this time. Thank you!



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## **Joy Congregational Council – MEMBERS NEEDED!**

Joy Lutheran Church is blessed by a strong faith community—people who care deeply about worship, fellowship, and serving our neighbors. Today, we invite you to prayerfully consider taking the next step in that shared ministry by serving on our Church Council.

We currently have five council positions to fill, and these roles are essential to the life and leadership of our congregation. Church Council members help guide the mission and vision of Joy, make important decisions, and ensure our church remains a faithful, welcoming presence in our community. Serving on Council is not about having all the answers—it's about listening, discerning, and serving together. Council members bring their unique gifts and perspectives to the table, supporting our pastor, strengthening our ministries, and helping Joy Lutheran Church respond to God's call in today's world.

If you:

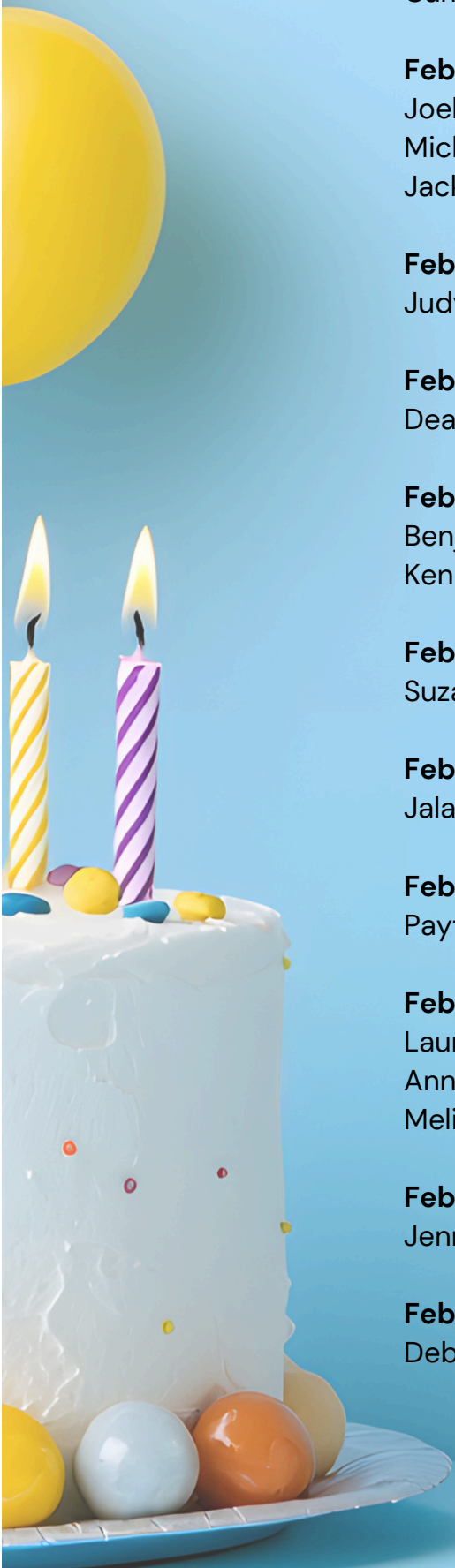
Care about the future of Joy Lutheran Church  
Want to help shape how we serve our congregation and community  
Are willing to share your time, heart, and ideas  
then this may be God's nudge for you.

Whether you're a longtime member or newer to the church, your voice and gifts matter. Please consider praying about this opportunity. If you have questions or would like to learn more about what serving on Church Council involves, we would be happy to talk with you. Our annual meeting will be held Sunday, February 15 following our worship service and elections to council will take place during the meeting.

**Joy's ministry is strongest when we serve together.**

Thank you for considering this meaningful way to support and lead our church.





**February 1st**  
Camden Peterson

**February 3rd**  
Joel Ditlefsen  
Michael Koshatka  
Jackie Johnson

**February 4th**  
Judy Bainbridge

**February 5th**  
Deanna Wheeler

**February 6th**  
Benjamin Wheeler  
Kendra Carlson

**February 8th**  
Suzanne Schumann

**February 9th**  
Jalana Nelson

**February 10th**  
Payton Hearn

**February 11th**  
Laurie Ellefson  
Annette Bethke  
Melinda Sorensen

**February 12th**  
Jennifer Alwin

**February 13th**  
Deborah Schmalz

**February 14th**  
Jon Karsten

**February 15th**  
Rachel Wold-Berg

**February 18th**  
Wayne Deloach

**February 20th**  
Autumn Ahlgren  
Morgan Ahlgren

**February 21st**  
Kelly Nelson

**February 22nd**  
Bennett Turner  
Renae Turner

**February 26th**  
Lisa Hatten

**February 28th**  
Janet Krueger





## ALONG WITH PASTOR KRISTIN

Pastor Kristin Engstrom, ELCA Global Missionary

January 2026

### Faithfulness amidst Changes

I am so thankful for the faithfulness you have shared with me as people and congregations who support my work as an ELCA global missionary. I have served in three different countries since becoming an ELCA missionary (Senegal, Zambia, Madagascar). As of September 2025, my work shifted once again. I continue to live in Madagascar, but I am now the ELCA Regional Representative for Madagascar and English speaking West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone).

Since starting my new call, I am often asked what it means to be an ELCA Regional Representative. The best response I've found is that I am a bridge in the relationship between the ELCA and our global companions.

In the ELCA, relationships are the basis for mission. While we can be in relationship through email or online meetings, it is also important to be together, in person. To pray, to eat, to talk together. Just as



God came to be with us, *Greeting students in sign language (with the teacher's help) at the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria school for deaf students* in person—in Jesus Christ. As the ELCA Regional Representative, I visit and participate in important events in our companion churches. I also give a lot of speeches, listen in a lot of meetings, and pray often with others.

Another part of my role is to facilitate grants our companions receive from the ELCA. During my visits, I make sure to visit communities and church workers who lead grant supported projects. Then, I can share with you, as members of the ELCA, the good work of God we are doing together.

*Leaders of a Village Savings Program run by the Lutheran Church in Guinea.*



### Accompanying Pastor Kristin

My work as an ELCA Global Missionary is possible thanks to the generosity of many congregations and individuals in the ELCA. Thank you! You can contact me at [kristin.engstrom@elca.org](mailto:kristin.engstrom@elca.org). You are also invited to support me as an ELCA Global Missionary [here](https://www.alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com). Previous newsletters are available on my blog [alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com](https://www.alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com).



Pastor Kristin Engstrom

I live in Madagascar and serve as the ELCA Representative in Madagascar and English speaking West Africa. I have been an ELCA global missionary since 2016, serving first in Senegal and then Zambia, and now in Madagascar

I'm originally from the midwestern United States, and served as a parish pastor in New Jersey for six years prior to beginning my call with ELCA Global Mission.







# WALKING TOGETHER

*Church Without Walls*

March 21, 2026

8:00 – 4:00

\$25 Per Participant

Bethany Lutheran Church – Rice Lake, WI

Keynote Speaker: Natalia Terfa



Register and Details Here:

<https://nswi.org/walking-together-event>



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America