

TIDINGS OF JOY

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2026

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LOVE, LISTEN, LEARN, LEAD



Joy is a spiritual community sharing Christ in a challenging world.

Dear JOY!ful Family,

When we experience fresh encounters with the living Christ at the table of grace, we should share that Good News! Pray for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit! With our Ambassador program, first-time guests are warmly received. We pray that our worship will always be sincere and enthusiastic. We are gathered together in unity – not uniformity or complete agreement.

Our evangelical witness is far more important than meetings, busy work, and programs – NOT that those AREN'T important. Empowered, taught, and led by the Spirit, we participate in the ongoing, continuing action that began with the Pentecost event. (Could that be why the Pentecost season is so long?

Hmmmm). There is a steady stream of new residents purchasing or renting new homes in new neighborhoods. The tough part

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SCAN FOR ON-LINE
GIVING



Our mission is to share the Good News of grace and love with all through worship, service, and fellowship.



MEET OUR STAFF

CHURCH STAFF & OFFICERS

Pastor-Art Wuertz

Administrative Assistant-

Zsuzsanna Jobbagy

Director of Music-Silas Daniel

Choir Director-Linda Aker

Handbell Director-

Melissa Daniel

Sexton-Carson Faris

Treasurer-Caroline Bernard

CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS:

President- Karin Campbell

Vice President-John Voyles

Secretary- Linda Aker

Treasurer-Caroline Bernard

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Richard Cognetti

Carson Faris

J.R. Frederiksen

Doug Juhl

Diana O'Neill

Paul Spellman

Patty Willoughby



DATE

NAME

08/01

Sally Hurley

08/02

Glenda Lizak

Willa Coffman

08/07

Laura Vales

08/08

Sam McHenry

Carson Faris

08/09

Ken Kutscher

08/10

Lisa Schiavi

Mike Schiavi

08/11

Carmine Saladino

08/12

Patty Willoughby

08/16

Joanne Kolch

Wallace Thomas Jr.

08/17

Beth Frederiksen

08/19

Jim Kuzmanovich

Jen Hudson

08/21

Cheryl Burck

08/23

Ed Lushbaugh

Rita Brokaw

08/25

Mary Wright

08/26

Sharyn Hiergesell

08/31

Peggy Dietz

Continued from Page 1

is that they may not have any inclination to seek out a new *church* home. Maybe our JOY!Journey Small Groups will bring a nibble or two. Maybe a prayer walk down a new street, other than the curiosity factor, will nudge someone to check us out. Maybe an “elevator conversation” with the person ahead of or behind us in line?

The people whom Jesus loves – every single person, of course – benefit in life-changing ways when they experience His compassionate love. Our Savior doesn’t ask us to do that which He doesn’t believe we can do. It might be a jarring jolt to our comfort level, the neat little box we put ourselves in. Our church may not be perfect. Its’ members certainly are not! But as long as we keep the main thing the main thing and put first things first, which is the proclamation of the Word, our Lord promises that the gates of hell will not be able to stop us or make us back down.

Keep encouraging one another and be emboldened by what God is always up to. It is His delight and good pleasure to give us the kingdom to abundantly share.

I'll see you in church! Pastor Art

Happy Anniversary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>No. of Yrs.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>No. of Yrs.</i>
08/04	Rich & Elise Cognetti	64 yrs.	08/11	Scott & Mary Kay Farrell	53 yrs.
08/07	Charlie & Marcia Meier	55 yrs.		Art & Debra Wuertz	42 yrs.
	Jim & Joan Nicholson	50 yrs.	08/16	Kenneth & Linda Erhardt	57 yrs.
08/08	Bob & Joanne Kolch	46 yrs.	08/17	Susan & Dennis Zumbahlen	57 yrs.
08/10	Phil & Glenda Lizak	41 yrs.	08/27	David & Sheryl Mitchell	43 yrs.
	Edie & Lee Stewart	69 yrs.			

President's Message

On June 19th, the Congregation voted to proceed with the proposed Joy Campus Improvement Project. Each month I hope to provide an update to the Congregation concerning the progress we're making. The following is the status following this month's Council meeting.

The Council has adopted a Management Organization Plan to control the project, monitor the funding, and review proposals. Ray Ihlenburg was appointed as the Project Leader to be the point of contact with all contractors.

Council also authorized moving ahead with new landscaping in front of the church, and proceeding with the garage renovation.

Pending action includes the design and permitting agreements for the Gathering Room addition and all the site work (sewers, retention pond, and parking renovation).

As projects unfold, please read and obey all construction signs prohibiting unauthorized access. This is for everyone's safety and makes our insurance people happy.

In the near future there will be a serious workday to empty the garage in preparation for the interior renovation work.

Please don't forget the Congregational Meeting scheduled for Sunday August 9th at 11:30 am. We have two constitutional changes to vote on.

Karin

COUNCIL



WAYS TO WELCOME NEW PEOPLE

- Warmth and Hospitality – the working name of our 2-5-year project – is also at the core of the Gospel.
- Good first impression – on Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, our website, our Daktronic sign, our social media.
- Care for the building and grounds. We will begin to see improvements soon!
- Escorting guests through the building. Thanks to our AMBASSADORS we no longer point and say, “it’s that way”.
- After worship, seek out the first-time guests rather than hanging with your “peeps”.
- There is no harm in saying, “I don’t think we’ve met before”.
- Try to refrain from insider church jargon.

Thankfully, we do most of the other 43 suggestions I didn’t list remarkably well! Keep up the great warmth and hospitality, Family of JOY!

Pastor Art

CALL FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Mark your calendars for:

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2026 ~ 11:30 AM

***For the purpose of ratifying
changes to our constitution.***

No other business shall
be considered.

All voting members are asked to
attend and let your voices be
heard.



This is our moment



JOY Lutheran
Church

**2-5 year Project
APPROVED**

**Warmth and
hospitality**

It is who we are.

**Our spaces should
reflect our hearts.**



“HERO OF THE MONTH” RAY IHLENBURG

This seems like a “slam dunk”.

There isn't enough room in this newsletter to list everything Ray does behind the scenes at JOY! He even plays the accordion on Sundays and “Seasons of Joy” concerts! He is also doing a lot with grounds maintenance and landscaping, serving on the Security Team, Property, and most noteworthy, invested countless hours on the Design team for our facility upgrades and expansion.

What a blessing you are to this church, Ray!

LUTHERAN MEN ^{IN} MISSION

Men of JOY! It has been too long since
we have gotten together.
Thomas Randall and Pr. Art invite you to
breakfast together in Swenson Hall.

On Thursday, August 6th, at 8:00 am,
they will be your hosts for a
pancake, bacon, and sausage breakfast.
Please join them to “break bread”
together.



FIGHT HUNGER SUNDAY

THE LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH IS OUR FIGHT HUNGER SUNDAY.
YOU CAN HELP!

- 1) **ELCA WORLD HUNGER-MONETARY DONATIONS USING YOUR
NUMBERED DONATION ENVELOPES OR THE PEW ENVELOPES.**
- 2) **INTERFAITH FOOD BANK-NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS CAN BE
PLACED ON THE CARTS PROVIDED**

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

OUR NEXT FIGHT HUNGER SUNDAY DATE:

August 30th





Thank You

*is not sufficient a word to express
my gratitude to everyone who
helped make our VBS a success.*

*Not all the children who enrolled,
were able to participate for one
reason or another.*

Everyone who was there had a great time.

*My thanks to Tracy Carter, Jude Gonzalez,
Terry Owen, Emma Tarantole,*

*Tamara Thomas, Linda Ware, Sally Wheeler,
Patty Willoughby, Pr. Art Wuertz, and
Debbie Zander.*

*I wish to extend a special Thank You to our
anonymous benefactors who donated the funds
to make “Emerald Crossing” happen.*

God bless each and everyone of you.

We have planted the seed.

God will let it grow.

Susan Jobbagy



Can you feel it?

Can you feel the Holy Spirit sparking our imagination, planting seeds of possibility in our midst? This fall, as we look forward to 2027, we gather around a simple but powerful theme:

Imagine

Imagine what God can do through us when we open our hearts, our hands, and our future to the Spirit's leading. Let's imagine boldly this fall.

We are not done yet—God is still shaping us, still calling us, still opening new doors. And as part of that shared vision, we will gather for a Celebration Dinner where you'll hear more about the future we're imagining together.

SAVE THE DATE

Imagination Celebration Dinner

Sunday, October 4th at 4:00pm – The Lodge at Candler Hills

Seating is limited – tickets available in September

Imagine what God can do through us.
Imagine what God can do through you.
Just Imagine.



Mary Magdalene
the Shunammite woman

Ruth
Esther
Sarah

Led by Lynn Ihlenburg

Women's Bible Study Saturday mornings in August

Starts Saturday, August 1st @ 10:00am in Swenson Hall
(5 sessions)

Women in the Wait, Christine Jayakaran

Waiting can feel confusing, silent, and painfully slow. We wait for healing, direction, restoration, and promises to unfold. Yet throughout Scripture, we see women whose seasons of waiting became places of transformation.

We will explore 5 women in the Bible who deepen their faith, build courage, and fulfill God's purposes in the wait.

What if your waiting season is not wasted, but divinely designed to shape you?

SPECIAL NOTICE

**Tuesday, August 18, 2026 is a
Primary Election Day**

**Swenson Hall is a designated
voting site.**

**The church office will be open
for church business.**

Swenson Hall is only open for voting.

**Beginners' Bible Study is cancelled.
No meetings will be held in the hall.
Council will be meeting in the Narthex.**

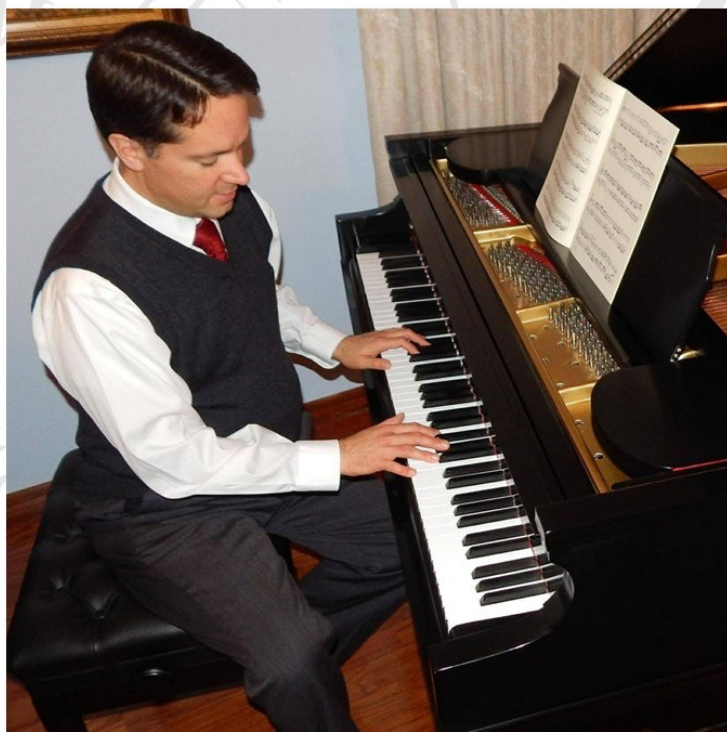
Seasons of JOY

Concert Series

2025-26 Season

A New Musical Adventure

John Matthew Wilkinson



Join us when we welcome John Matthew Wilkinson for an afternoon of original piano works, sacred songs, and fresh hymn arrangements for voice and piano. A lyric tenor accompanying himself at the piano, he weaves together music shaped by faith, beauty, and devotion. Expressing both quiet reflection and radiant joy, the program

invites listeners into a peaceful and uplifting hour of hope-filled sound.

August 23, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. in the sanctuary
at JOY Lutheran Church (7045 SW 83rd Place, Ocala, FL 34476)

Free Admission. Reception follows concert.

LOOKING AHEAD...



SEPTEMBER:

**Saturday, September 12, 9:00 AM-
Annual Worship Workshop for all Worship
Assistants and Ushers**

**Sunday, September 13th-
Back to Two Sunday Services (8:15 & 11:00)**

**Tuesday, September 15th, and 22nd, 7:00 pm
“JOY!Formation” for new folks/ prospec-
tive members. IN Swenson Hall**

**Sunday, September 27th-
New Members will be received.**

OCTOBER:

**Sunday, October 4th, 4:00 pm:
“IMAGINATION CELEBRATION”
at The Lodge at OTOW**

BIBLE READINGS FOR AUGUST 2026

SUNDAY	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
02-Aug	ISAIAH	PSALM	ROMANS	MATTHEW
	55:1-5	145:8-9, 14-21	9:1-5	14:13-21
09-Aug	1 KINGS	PSALM	ROMANS	MATTHEW
	19:9-18	85:8-13	10:5-15	14:22-23
16-Aug	ISAIAH	PSALM	ROMANS	MATTHEW
	56:1, 6-8	67	11:1-2a, 29-32	15:[10-20] 21-28
23-Aug	ISAIAH	PSALM	ROMANS	MATTHEW
	51:1-6	138	12:1-8	16:13-20

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT JOY:

E-mail: joyocalafl@gmail.com

Web Site: www.joylcocala.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/joylutheranchurch.ocala

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/joylutheranchurch.ocala

Joy Blog:

<https://joyocala.blog>

Photos & Videos to:

Joyocalaconnect@gmail.com



AUGUST

2026

SUN	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
PLEASE observe the following deadlines for <u>copy ready articles</u> to be placed in the bulletin and the newsletter. Bulletin deadline is Monday 8:00 am Tidings deadline is on the 15th of the month. Thank you. Susan						1 Women In Wait Study-10 SH
2 Tools 4 Teaching Drive New Connection- 9:15 A Worship Service 10:00 A	3 Ministry Leaders' Coffee Clatch 9A– N	4 Beginners' Bible Study 11A (SH) Tutoring 3:30-5:30 P (sh)	5 Joyful Hands 9A CE 2 PM Worship Svc 6:30P	6 LMM Breakfast 8A (SH) Publicity 1P (N)	7 Cleaning Service 1-3 P "Holy Hiatus" 7P (OC)	8 Women In Wait Study-10 SH
9 Worship Svc: 10 AM Congregational Mtg. 11:30 AM (S)	10 PASTOR'S VACATION	11 PASTOR'S VACATION Property 10 A (SH) Tutoring 3:30-5:30 P (sh)	12 PASTOR'S VACATION Joyful Hands 9A Worship Svc 6:30P	13 PASTOR'S VACATION Wear Gloves Lunch Share (OC) Outreach 1:30P (SH) Voting Equip. Delivery	14 PASTOR'S VACATION Cleaning Service 1-3 P	15 Women In Wait Study-10 SH
16 WORSHIP SVC 10 AM	17	18 PRIMARY ELECTION-SH HALL CLOSED: OFFICE WILL BE OPEN Council 1P (N)	19 Joyful Hands 9A Worship Svc 6:30 P Voting Equip. PU	20 Ambassador Program Evaluation 1:30 P (SH) BCR –Rehearsal 6:30 P (S)	21 Cleaning Service 1-3 P	22 Women In Wait Study-10 SH
23 Worship Service 10 AM Concert 3PM	24 Stephen Ministry 9:30 AM Intern Starts	25 Beginners' Bible Study 11A (SH) Pineland Ministers Mtg. 12 Noon	26 Joyful Hands 9A Worship Svc 6:30 P	27 BCR –Rehearsal 6:30 P (S)	28 Cleaning Service 1-3 P	29 Interfaith Dinner Share (OC) Women In Wait Study-10 SH
30 Fight Hunger Worship Service 10 A	31	Tutoring 3:30-5:30 P (sh)				

Contact Us

7045 SW 83rd Place

Ocala, FL 34476

Phone: 352.854.4509

Fax: 352.854.4845

email: joyocalafl@gmail.com

www.joyncocala.org

www.facebook.com/joylutheranchurch.ocala

www.instagram.com/joylutheranchurch.ocala

<https://joyocala.blog>



AUGUST 2026

Our vision:

***“Joy is a spiritual community sharing
the love of Christ in a challenging
world”.***

