

# Annual Report

February 28, 2010

*A Review of 2009*

*A Prelude to 2010*



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Youngest Members of 2009  
West Virginia Mission Trip

# Spirit of Joy

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Deeper  
Faith

Joyful  
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Reaching  
More

8600 Potter Road

Weddington, NC 28104  
[www.spiritofjoy.us](http://www.spiritofjoy.us)

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# President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We can label the year 2009 as one of great faith and great courage. We not only believed **in** God, but we also **believed God**. We believed God is who He says He is, and we believed He can do what He says He can do.

## Here are a few 2009 highlights.

**First**, we started the year with an unbalanced budget; i.e., \$100,000 more in expected expenses than in projected income. But, as a congregation, we approved that budget as a statement of faith that God would provide what we needed. And provide He did! Through a combination of good stewardship in reducing expenses, excellent financial management by everyone (especially by our Treasurer), and increased giving, we ended the year almost even. All glory goes to God! Thank you, Lord, for blessing Spirit of Joy.

**Second**, when finances were at their tightest, Council voted to increase our congregation gift to God to 10% of our congregational income, rather than use that money for ourselves. God is very clear about this in the Bible – the first fruits are His and He wants 10% (i.e., tithe). But being an incredibly generous God, He allows us to keep 90% for ourselves! This decision made me feel exceptionally blessed to be a part of a group with that depth of faith in our Lord. God will provide; our job is to trust Him.

**Third**, in August, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) voted to ordain practicing homosexuals in committed relationships. Our feeling, as a church, was that the ELCA had abandoned the traditional authority of scripture. On Nov. 22, we courageously voted, by 90% agreement, to end our relationship with the ELCA and to join the biblically-based Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). Praise God for making His will known to us and for giving us the faith and courage to obey Him.

Our Council also set some goals for the year; I am not going to report on each of these individually, but my prayer is that you saw evidence of these in our church this year.

1. Emphasize prayer.
2. Increase the help that SOJ gives to the local community.
3. Focus on Family and Youth Ministries.
4. Consolidate the coordination of volunteer ministries.
5. Unify and strengthen communications.
6. Deepen the faith of our adult members.

7. Do something BIG!!!! This HAD to be from God, if it were truly to be BIG! So, our approach was to wait and see what God would do. And He did respond in mighty ways. He gave us the courage to take a stand on His Word as the basis of our ministry at SOJ. He provided what we needed financially exactly when we needed it. He said "trust me" and we did.

**In 2010**, we expect to expand the help that SOJ gives our local community much more. With the move to LCMC, we "manage," through God's guidance, where our SOJ tithe will go. Previously our tithe (often referred to as Benevolence) went to the ELCA. So expect to see a huge emphasis on local programs, both monetary and service. And I encourage you to plug yourself in here. The rewards are out of this world!

And this is just the beginning. God is good, all the time. He will do great things again this year at Spirit of Joy.

In Christ,

*Ann Lashley*

# Pastor Ed's Report

**I wish I could remember** who told me this story ... as I remember it, their daughter's church – in another state – had a new pastor. Every Sunday for the first several months he said, "I don't know what it is yet, but I'm praying for something big."

"Something big" grew into an expectation for that church.

In fact, the pastor helped them clarify this expectation. He said, "I want it to be so big that we'll know it has to be from God – and not from us."

**I shared that story** at the first meeting of this past year's council. "Something big" went onto the list of this past year's goals – "something so big that we'll know it's from God."

For the first half of the year we joked that "not going broke" would be our something big. Staring a generation-worst recession square in the face, Spirit of Joy projected receipts of \$400,000 and expenses of \$500,000. Only faith could pass that budget. Only faith could meet that budget. Only God could keep us afloat without major cuts.

God is good.

Yes, we had a deficit. Nevertheless, in the face of financial hardship, you gave more than the previous year!

Thanks be to you.

But more importantly, thanks be to God.

## Our second something big ...

When Elijah went out to meet the Lord, the earth shook, the wind blew, and the fire raged ... all before he ever heard from the Lord. The moral of the story? Beware of asking God to show up!!!

A second big thing happened this year. In a powerful show of both unity and conviction, Spirit of Joy voted to stand on the Word of God ... which meant leaving the ELCA.

I've been a Lutheran all my life – as were many of my great-great-great grandparents. I've worked in a Synod Office and for the LCA. I was ordained in the ELCA and have served this denomination with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind. Our actions will cause a strain in treasured friendships. But one thing is more important, my faith in God and the foundation of his Word.

I am honored that you share these convictions!

And friends, I believe that our unity and conviction are powerful signs of God's presence in our midst. Our culture and its values keep ripping people away from God and his Word – for example, the lowest church attendance in U.S. History is in this generation – but we held our ground for God and faith. And that's not us ... that's God showing up in this place.

**Next year** ... I'm praying for something even bigger. I don't know what it is, but I want it to be so big that we'll know again that God showed up! I give thanks for all who gave of their time, talents, and treasure this past year.

I give thanks for our committees and our wonderful staff.

Most of all, I give thanks for a church council who put God first. Any glimpse of power that a church ever receives starts when there are a core group of people who truly seek God.

Join me this year in seeking God ever more passionately.

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Ed*

## Pastor Fran's Report

It was a wonderful year, full of challenges and blessings.

Several people that I'd been visiting went home to Jesus. A good thing for them, a sad time for their families and for me. Easter and Christmas, lots of work for all involved, but what a glorious time of worship and celebration they were!

In October, I was introduced to the Formational Prayer seminars.

Things I learned in the one day seminar encour-

aged me to hold the Service of Lament in early December with the help of my friend Margaret Howell and her harp.

The last week in January, Doris Motte began a new Bible study group for women titled "Journey to Freedom" and invited Kristen and I to help her. I am excited about this venture. I know God can heal inner hurts and this study gives a shape within which we can work towards that goal. I am so excited about this that I've signed up for the four day seminar in June to learn more.

My prayer for this new year is, "Lord, what do you want for Spirit of Joy in this coming year?"

Blessings,

*Pastor Fran*

## Faith Development & Counseling

After finishing my internship in Pastoral Counseling and graduating from Columbia International University in May, I began as an official staff member at Spirit of Joy in June. Serving in the areas of Pastoral Counseling and Faith Development, a.k.a. small groups and adult Sunday School, has been a privilege and at the same time a challenge. I am often reminded of the promise that God equips us for that to which He has called us!

**Counseling:** My first "calling," counseling has been a blessing and a unique opportunity to get to know our church family better and also see the power of God to transform and heal lives.

**Small Groups:** We kicked off this past fall with a congregation-wide study of The Truth Project. Many small groups are still meeting, some continuing with the Truth Project and others having begun new studies. After examining many models for small groups ministry, we are developing a structure for our small groups ministry at SOJ which makes sense for our church community.

**Sunday School:** The fall held multiple great classes for adults: The Truth Project, How to De-Stress Your Life, a Women's Class, and Just Walk Across the Room. These have led into a spring with studies such as Crazy Love, a new parenting study, and a marriage study to come.

In addition to these "staff" responsibilities, I also have the privilege of working with Angela Carlson

and our Student Leadership Team, comprised of nine incredible high school students with a heart for God, a willingness to serve, and a desire to live out loud for Him. The Leadership Team has been able to help coordinate and lead events for the youth, as well as help out with youth group and other things Pastor Ed has needed help with.

I am very blessed to be able to serve you and serve *with* you here at Spirit of Joy. I have realized even more in the past seven months how many people it truly takes for our ministries to happen. I am so blessed by and thankful for the leaders God has raised up to lead Sunday School classes, small groups, and the youth! I'm also thankful for the staff I get to work with here, each with a servant's heart, a commitment to integrity and faithfulness to God. They have mentored and encouraged me and have helped me walk the "straight and narrow" path. Our church family here is amazing and I love you all!

Love in Christ,

*Kristen Sigmon*

## Music Ministry

2009 was a very busy and blessed year for us! We sadly had to take a sabbatical from the youth choir due to low participation and me having a baby. We will revive this again when we have more interest.

The **First Decade Choir** still continued to thrive thanks to the dedication and time put in by Janie Owens and Fran Whelan. They have blessed us with their efforts and continue to encourage our younger sisters and brothers in Christ to raise their sweet voices in praise to the Lord. They did a Spring (Power) and a Christmas (On Our Way to Bethlehem) Cantata this year with great participation. They continue to present a special anthem for us once a month during worship at both services. Out of the "mouths of babes" comes praise to our Risen King!

Our **Adult Worship Choir** has been very busy as usual this year! This has been a great time to fellowship, build relationships and praise God together always keeping in mind that we are worship leaders in the church. We always kick off our Fall season with the annual choir retreat. This is a time to get away, reconnect with each other as well as remind us of the reason we sing. We have devotional and fellowship time. We take our first look at the Christmas Cantata for the year and sing, sing, sing! This group has always been willing to put in the time and the effort to make beautiful offerings to our Lord.

Whether it be a usual Sunday morning anthem, or a special offering such as the Easter music including the Tennebrae service, The Shadow of the Cross and the Christmas cantata, Only Love. We were fortunate to have a nice orchestra for our Christmas cantata this year. We had fourteen people volunteer to play their instruments to help us welcome the newborn King. Individuals have also prepared a lot of special music for Holy Week, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Thanks again to Paul Thomas for coordinating our Christmas Day service.

The choir has also brought some of their pieces to local nursing homes to spread the Good News to the residents. Always aware of The Great Commission, the choir also volunteered to sing for the Billy Graham Live Nativity and the Soup Kitchen as outreach projects. The women of the choir participated in supplying the music for the Women's Retreat in February. Some of our other members used voice and instruments to play for our Rally Day celebration and our Christmas Craft Pot Luck.

Thanks to **Ian Faires** who has great amounts of music to prepare every week, especially during the holiday seasons when the music load is doubled and tripled. We couldn't do the beautiful pieces without him. The choir has touched my heart as I hope they have touched those in the congregation. Our goal has always been to connect to and praise God on a higher level with music and song. We pray that we help others do the same.

The **Praise Bands** have also been utilized quite a bit this year. Our **Sunday Morning Praise Band** has a few dedicated members that help to add depth to our worship services by sharing their gifts on instruments. Sunday morning worship is made more special by the added layers that their hearts and instruments supply. A special treat we had this year was the group of instrumentalists who provided music for us on our outdoor services this summer led by Gary Roseman. We also got a taste of this down-home, Southern Gospel music at our Thanksgiving Service. Always a favorite. They also pitched in to make Christmas special by playing for the Sunday worship after Christmas.

Our **Youth Praise Band** has been pretty active too. They started the year by playing for common worship time in the AWANAS program every week. They have also led worship on several occasions. In their weekly meetings, this is a safe place for them to explore their talents and love of music and the Lord, and to find a place where they can fit in with their peers. Some who would like to learn instruments have also found a place to pick up a guitar, other

instrument or vocals and learn a song or two. I think that Eddie Bender has done an excellent job of taking a group of varied ages and abilities and making it into a cohesive, successful band. All are welcome here if you love music and have a heart for the Lord.

Our **Bell Choir** has continued to offer beautiful pieces throughout the year. They attended a Bell Choir Festival this Fall to learn new music, new techniques and to learn from other bell choirs. Thank you to Jessica Bustamante for leading this group. A special thanks to Greg Underwood for sharing his abilities in song arrangement and presentation with us. We hope to see a little more of this group this year!

This ministry helps me to reach out and touch the heart of God, to bring Him a little closer to me (more likely, me closer to Him). I pray that He will continue to bless our efforts in the coming year. To God alone be the Glory! (Soli Deo Gloria!)

*Rhonda Mauney*  
**Director of Music Ministries**

## Volunteer Ministry

We all have a wonderful opportunity to respond to God's unique call to each one of us.

At the end of the year I was blessed to be able to concentrate on Volunteer Ministry at Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

In November members were encouraged to fill out a Time and Talent Form. The Time and Talent Form lists a variety of exciting areas where members can volunteer in the ministries at Spirit of Joy. The groups and committees at Spirit of Joy were given these volunteer names and the volunteers will be invited to join in those specific ministries.

Time and Talent Forms will now be part of the annual Stewardship Campaign.

In 2010 with ongoing communication, education, written material, personal and group gatherings, members will be encouraged to work cooperatively and support the gifts of each person, to participate in God's plan to serve others both inside and outside Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

We need you and you are necessary! God has made each of you special. Perfection is not required! Only a willingness to love and serve the Lord.

"The body does not consist of one member but of many...If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where

would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as God chose. If all were a single organ, where would the body be?" 1 Corinthians 12:14, 17-19

If you need help finding a ministry where you can serve at Spirit of Joy, please contact me. I will spend time talking to you and sharing the many fun and wonderful opportunities we have at Spirit of Joy.

**Volunteer Minister and Office Manager**  
**Your Sister In Christ,**

*Karen Weiner*



## Christian Education Committee

As with the previous year, especially due to key staff changes, 2009 was once again a year of transition for the majority of the groups found within the Christian Education Committee at Spirit of Joy. With the resignation of our Minister to Youth and Families in February 2009, Pastor Ed took on a more direct role within Youth Ministry to work with our student leaders and with numerous adult volunteers to maintain a focus on providing quality programs for our youth. Also, with the staff addition of the Pastoral Care Deacon Kristen Sigmon in June 2009, attention was placed on nurturing the faith of our adults through her focus on both small group coordination and adult studies, in addition to her role as Youth Ministry support and counselor.

Partly in response to these staff changes, this committee returned to its older model of structure and departed from the Children & Family Committee, Youth & Family Committee, and Adult Committee model. The Christian Education Committee is now unified and comprises of 3 sub-committees; the Children Committee (birth to 5<sup>th</sup> grade responsibilities), the Youth Committee (6<sup>th</sup> grade thru 12<sup>th</sup> responsibilities), and the Adult Committee (college and adult responsibilities to include small groups).

With respect to **children**, a continued effort was placed on the committee's goal of bringing into the home: caring conversations, rituals and traditions, family devotions, and acts of service. This effort of directly nurturing the faith within our children at Spirit of Joy, both inside as well as outside the walls of the church, was evidenced by supporting such

successful programs as: Spirit Rotation Time, Children's Story Time, VBS, AWANA, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Decade Choir.

With respect to **youth**, a continued effort was placed on the committee's goal of providing varied support for the church's staff, the volunteer teachers and the adult volunteers, with the education and mentorship of the youth of Spirit of Joy. This goal was successfully achieved through God's grace and by supporting diverse programs including: J2A, Rite13, YAC, Senior High and Middle School Youth Groups, Drama Team, Liturgical Dance, and the Youth Praise Band / Choir.

With respect to **adults**, a continued effort was placed on the committee's goal of providing support for the church's staff and adult volunteers with the task of educating, growing and nurturing faith, and building adult leadership both inside and outside the walls of Spirit of Joy. This goal was successfully achieved through the efforts of Kristen Sigmon and the numerous adult volunteers as evidenced by the implementation of the DVD-based small group curriculum *The Truth Project*, which continued to build momentum into 2010. Also, this goal was successfully achieved through the offering of adult classes throughout the week as well as classes offered during the Sunday school hour such as *Making Ends Meet*, *How to De-Stress Your Life*, *Love & Respect*, *the Truth Project*, *Just Walk Across the Room*, and *Coupon Clippers: Saving Money, Saving Faith*.

I wish I could extend my gratitude to everyone by name that had helped within Christian Education last year, but hopefully it will suffice to again simply state, thanks to the leaders and participants that help us praise God through the arts with music, drama, and dance...thanks to the educators, organizers, mentors and shepherds that spend their valuable time with our kids on Sunday mornings...thanks to all involved that continue to love and nurture our children with the Gospel of Christ through AWANA...thanks to the Student Leaders for giving our children role models...thanks to the youth and all the youth leaders that continue to step in and offer your time and guidance...thanks to the staff that help us all continue to walk with Christ...and thanks to anyone who has ever taken the time to reach out with their gifts and talents to help grow the faith within our children, youth, and adults at Spirit of Joy. With Glory to God for all things...

*Dan Owens*

## Communication Committee

When the new council was put into place in January of 2009, it was determined that there was a need to better communicate church activities, events, Bible Studies, etc. with the congregation and to develop more of an interactive line of communication. In addition, it was determined that we needed to find a consistent way of communicating decisions that council was making on behalf of the congregation, even though council meetings are open to the entire congregation. As a result, council elected LeAnn Rice to the new position of Communications Liaison for Spirit of Joy.

During 2009, we designed a new logo and "look" for all Spirit of Joy communication pieces. Our church website was redesigned and the information brought up to date. Our church calendar is available through the website and downloads are available for members who are participating in various church activities and studies. Additionally, we have launched several blogs in an effort to provide up-to-the-minute information, announcements, reports and scheduling changes to the congregation. We currently have a main informational blog for Spirit of Joy as well as individual blogs for Pastor Ed, Pastor Fran, the youth, the women, and our music ministry. By subscribing to one or all of these blogs, members receive an email each time the blog(s) is updated. Each one of our blogs can be easily accessed through our website.

In 2010, the goals for communications are to increase blog interaction and get the congregation used to this form of communication, and to incorporate the new Spirit of Joy logo and "look" into our monthly newsletter and any additional communication pieces going out of Spirit of Joy.

Respectfully submitted,

*LeAnn Rice*

## Fellowship Committee

**We hosted 3 Summer Fellowship Events.**

June-Chocolate Sunday

July-Red, White and Blue Sunday

August-Salad Sunday

We also served Ice cream after the Blessing of the Animals in September.

We participated in Ahhhhhhhh with a booth and providing refreshments after the 8:30 service.

We hosted the potluck on Commitment Sunday in December.

Throughout the year we organized and hosted several funerals.

We also provided many care meals to members of the congregation.

We meet the 1st Wednesday of the month at 7:30 in the library.

Respectfully submitted,

*Pat Schell*

## Missions Committee

Greetings from your Spirit of Joy "Missions" committee. As always we want to invite you to visit one of our meetings. We meet every second Monday of each month at 7pm in the new part of our building (back right corner).

In summary during 2009 your mission committee was involved in the following:

- \* **Coordinating two blood drives here at church**
- \* **School supplies for needy families**
- \* **Operation Christmas Child**
- \* **Adopt a highway**
- \* **The West Virginia mission trip**
- \* **Fundraisers**
- \* **Coat drive**
- \* **Coordinated awareness efforts for Via de Cristo and TEC**

We began discussions on benevolence, pending the decision of our church to join LCMC.

2009 members included: Eric Kindberg, Sandra Perry, Dottie Owczarzak, Ann Lashley, Travis Chambers, Marianne Ripper, Mike Rockel, Pat Shell, Craig Bender, and Gary Roseman. Lissa Roseman, council Liaison.

Thanks for supporting missions! Lives are being changed!

## Property Committee

We had a busy year in the Property Committee this year. Our goal is to maximize the use of God's house.

**1.** We have taken on the responsibility of scheduling for our building. This has allowed Karen and the Pastor to handle other matters (Thanks VC).

**2.** We organized many congregational work days. Thanks to all the helping hands.

**3.** The aging HVHC systems in the church remain a challenge and we need to find a new point of contact to oversee them.

**4.** We moved the church from a well water supply to Union County water.

**5.** We hope to find new and better ways to maximize the use of our facilities. Always with the goal of doing that which would please our Lord.

Prayerfully Submitted

*Dave Drehs*

Committee Chairman

## Stewardship Committee

Mission: To encourage members of Spirit of Joy to volunteer their Time, Talent and Treasures for God.

Early in the year, our committee met with the help of John Hejka, our facilitator, to establish five action areas in order to accomplish our Stewardship Mission which includes: Make members more aware of time and talent needs, ask people to volunteer, help new members learn about the areas for volunteering, testimonials to get out the message, and improve communications about stewardship-related topics.

### Action Areas

#### New Member Initiatives:

The next new member group was inducted in the Spring and this gave us the opportunity to help assign mentors to each family, get Time and Talent information dispersed, and encourage new members to experience the joy of serving.

### Rally Day:

In late August a family Rally Day was held between church services in the Fellowship Hall. Many church groups participated in this event. Families enjoyed the food, games, face painting, prizes, new SOJ tee shirts and hats, music and even an outdoor dunkin booth! Volunteering was the theme of the day...sign-ups for Sunday School, sign-ups for Bible Study Groups, and new volunteers for all the committees supporting our church.

### Commitment Sunday:

In the fall, several Sundays were devoted to communicating to our members the information about pledging your time, talent and treasures.

The communications included: Faith Quest (join the adventure), member testimonials at worship, mailings devoted to financial information and pledging, Time and Talent sheets provided for all members, culminating on Commitment Sunday when we celebrated our commitment of Time, Talent, and Treasures.

sures.

We look forward to 2010 and our continuing challenge to encourage all our members to experience the joy of serving God at Spirit of Joy.

## Worship Committee

The committee met sporadically during 2009 to facilitate, promote and counsel all aspects of the worship experience" at Spirit of Joy.

We thank the Altar Guild, Acolytes, Greeters, Communion Assistants, Ushers and Lay Readers who made our services the best ever. Their dedication of time and effort are greatly appreciated. We have received a number of new volunteers from the congregation to participate in Worship Assistants Program. (The schedule is developed 2 months in advance to make the Church Newsletter so there is some delay before volunteers are assigned a Sunday)

Our Team Captains are very much appreciated for their dedication & service to Spirit of Joy. Dave Van Blarcom, Jim Peterson, Dell Schell, Craig Bender, Karen Thomas, Gary Thiemann, Linda Gaye and Mike White scheduled the 2009 Worship Assistants.

New Communion Ware (ceramic) is now being used. This was purchased from Bill Stewart who is the owner of Stewarts Village Gallery in Waxhaw.

The Worship Committee would like to welcome a new member, Mary Cleveland.

Yours in Christ,

*Dave Van Blarcom*

2009 members: Keith Kelleher (council advisor), Barbara White, Dave Van Blarcom and Pastor Ed

## GUYS

The GUYS enjoyed a year full of hard work as servants of God with lots of fun and fellowship thrown in.

As usual, we started the year with our Mission Trip to Welch, WVA to help out with projects organized by the McDowell Mission there.

In February we had the best ever "Sweetheart Valentine's Day" celebration which was quite moving at times with individual expressions of love.

March madness for us was the "Breakfast Bowl" at Jonathan's and Carolina Lanes in Matthews.

April involved designing and building a vendor cart for WELCA to use on Mother's Day.

In May we sent a small contingent of GUYS to Lutheridge to help spruce up the grounds for sum-

mer and do some electrical work. We also helped spread pine needles at one of our older widow's home.

Again this year we prepared summer Sunday breakfast for the congregation.

Kristen Sigmon graduated this past year and we continued her support until Fall. We continue to support our missionary families of Paul & Grace and recently added Eric & Mary Lynn and Jenny at the McDowell Mission.

In June we assembled and sent out 30+ care packages to military personnel, most of whom were serving overseas. We also helped repair one of our widow's fence, gates, and lawn mower.

In August, we participated with Rally Day by providing a Dunk Tank, which was a big hit with the kids. This past fall, we made a contribution and had several GUYS help with the Charlotte Lutheran Habitat House raising. Also, in the fall, we managed to paint the house of one of our single mothers. On Halloween in October we had a crew help one of our single moms move from her apartment to place her stuff into a temporary storage facility. The Live Nativity was setup, but unfortunately was rained out and had to be cancelled. Throughout the year we managed to accomplish several small projects in and around our facilities as requested by the Property Committee.

The GUYS elected a new President for 2010. Dan Owens will be taking over for David Hiza. Please continue to support and pray for the GUYS to be faithful servants in doing the Lord's work, both at SOJ and out in the community around us or in other mission areas where there are needs to be met.

Respectfully submitted,

*David Hiza*

## H.A.N.D.S.

### His Anointed Daughters Serving

2009 was a busy year for the Women of Spirit of Joy! Our theme for 2009 was from Romans 12:6-8 "In His grace, God has given us different gifts...serving others, serve them well...encourage others, be encouraging...giving, give generously." The year began with our Spirited Birthday Gala which celebrated all of the women's birthdays with tables decorated by month, a white elephant gift exchange and of course, birthday cake!

In February we packed up and headed to Camp

Caraway for the first of our two women's retreats "Stained Glass Masquerade". Forty-five women attended this retreat and left their masks at the foot of the cross.

Also in February we held our bi-annual Bake Sale followed by the NCSWO gathering which was hosted by our group.

In April we organized and filled 38 Easter baskets collected for the Union County Department of Social Services as well as the collection and mailing of college student exam packages and Care packages for members who are currently serving active duty in the military.

The month of May found us packing up and heading down to Isle of Palms, SC for our second women's retreat "Broken and Beautiful" which was attended by 20 ladies. During this retreat we took the broken shards of our lives and created something beautiful.

On Mother's Day we sold flowers to the children of the congregation to give to their moms. The flowers were displayed in a beautiful flower cart which was designed and constructed by Dave Hiza and the GUYS. We followed up this event with our annual Mother/Daughter Tea Party. In addition to the tea party, complete with finger sandwiches, cookies and tea, there was a hat contest and the announcement of Mother of the Year. Congratulations to Carol Beatty who won the award based on a letter written by her daughter, Dawn Beatty-Batten.

The Manly Brunch where we make/serve breakfast to the GUYS group was hosted in June. We also prepared a sub sandwich lunch for the GUYS who were working on a Habitat house. We took a vacation from meeting during the month of July.

In August we paid for and arranged to have the kitchen floors cleaned and sealed and we participated in Rally Day where the quilts our quilting circle made were on display.

Next on our agenda was the Health Fair, an event that highlighted healthcare options in our area and included both cholesterol screenings and flu shots.

The month of November was busy with the distribution and collection of Thanksgiving food bags which were delivered to and distributed by Union County Department of Social Services. We collected 85 bags which went to 63 families and fed approximately 150-200 people on Thanksgiving Day.

We ended the year by decorating the Sanctuary Christmas tree and the Hanging of the Greens followed by our bi-annual Bake Sale. Our bake sales provide us with the money we need to support our ongoing ministries which, in addition to the above, include: our sponsorship of missionaries in our congregation including the purchase of Flannel Graph boards and books for children in Uganda; support of Turning Point Ministries, the abused

women's shelter; the purchase of a DVD player for the Turning Point children and new communion implements for Spirit of Joy; donations to Pastor Reggie Hansome and Living Waters Lutheran Church, a new congregation; and our ongoing Knit Wits group, Quilting Group, and many women's bible studies. We also served at the Soup Kitchen twice this year.

Our events for 2010 include all of the above ministries and the possible addition of new events and ministries. All women of the church are invited to attend any women's group meetings or functions. Our theme for the upcoming year is from Psalm 126:2-3 *"Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy."*

Our monthly minutes and upcoming events can be found on our Blog Spot [www.sojoyful.blogspot.com](http://www.sojoyful.blogspot.com)

## Mutual Ministry

Early in 2009 Wayne Theurer resigned from Spirit of Joy leaving a vacancy in Youth Ministry that has been filled by Pastor Ed.

Kristin Sigmon was hired part time to help with the spiritual growth of the congregation through counseling and small group formation.

Katareena Done was hired as a part time technology administrator to implement new technologies including worship presentation preparation, weekly announcements, emails and the monthly newsletter. Both of these positions have enabled Pastor and Karen our office manager to develop additional ministry.

Karen has begun a Volunteer Coordination effort that will allow her to engage the congregation on a more personal level and match the spiritual gifts of our members to ministry and service opportunities.

Pastor Fran continues to reach out to our homebound, sick and hospitalized members as well as helping lead worship.

Rhonda Mauney and Ian Faires have continued to strengthen and expand our full music program.

Kathy Blair supports our littlest members of the family in the nursery each week and Vickie Cecil continues to keep us current on all our bills, payroll and organization.

Spirit of Joy is blessed to have such an abundance of talent and dedication in our staff.

Submitted by

*Craig Bender*

Mutual Ministry Chairperson

# Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church Annual Treasurer's Report For the Calendar Year 2009

Dear Members and Friends of Spirit of Joy,

We entered 2009 anticipating God to do something BIG. We approved a negative \$100,000 budget based on 2008 expenditures. We tightened the belt and cut wherever possible. There were no cost of living increases for the staff and all committees were asked to be conservative with expenses.

While we struggled financially this year with almost \$16,000 in heating/air expenses and having to get city water put in when our well pump died in the end, God provided just what we needed. We received income of **\$440,725** and we incurred expenses of **\$453,170**. This means we spent **\$12,446** more than we received. Our Contingency Fund of \$9338 was used to cover most of this difference.

Our assets increased **\$34,174** during 2009 due to land value appreciation. We ended the year with assets of **\$2,690,473** and liabilities of **\$1,392,899**. As a congregation, we made charitable contributions of **\$30,379** to ELCA, Soup Kitchen, Disaster Relief, Seminary students, and individuals in need. In addition, the G.U.Y.S. group gave **\$5,794** to seminary students, McDowell Mission, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Soup

Kitchen, and many individuals in need. WELCA gave **\$3,181** to Turning Point, Soup Kitchen, Seminary students and individuals in need and provided for much needed work to the kitchen floor.

From a stewardship perspective, individual families who pledged to the General Fund gave **\$221,009** against their pledges of **\$236,769**. In addition, members gave **\$95,618** against their 2009 pledges of **\$151,545** for the Capital Campaign. The congregation also provided **\$2,503** to the Awana Program, **\$3,100** to fund our new projectors, **\$769** to fund our music ministries, and **\$1847** for Flowers.

As we look ahead to 2010, we face the uncertainty that comes from the present economy and giving is down for January. Our weekly giving for January averaged \$6400 but our expenses averaged \$9500. There is no room to cut any further except for staff and we know that is not what God wants. We need to trust God's plan for this church and the many ministries it provides for the congregation and the surrounding community. After much prayer, I am submitting the 2010 budget which is based on our 2009 expenses and the giving that is needed to support them. I am confident that God will meet our needs, as HE HAS EVERY YEAR IN THE PAST. To God be the glory.

I welcome your questions and feedback.

Your Friend and Sister in Christ,

*Michele Bender*