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| CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE |  |

**Congregation Name and Location**

Name Joy Lutheran Church

Mailing address 717 Farm to Market 359

City Richmond State/Province Texas Zip/Postal Code 77406

Telephone (281) 762 – 3310 Fax (281) 232 – 2899

Email address Office@JoyRichmond.org

Congregation website www.joyrichmond.org

Seeking [x]  Full-time pastor [ ]  Part-time pastor [ ]  Either full-time or part-time
Call will be for [x]  Solo pastor [ ]  Senior pastor [ ]  Associate pastor

**Congregational President or Vice President**

Name Rick Curry Title Chairperson

Mailing address 3318 Colonel Court Dr

City Richmond State/Province Texas Zip/Postal Code 77406

Home phone Cell phone (832) 980 – 2112

Email address RICK.EWOFH@gmail.com

**Call Committee Chair**

Name Don Sattler

Mailing address 1219 Pioneer Drive

City Richmond State/Province Texas Zip/Postal Code 77406

Home phone Cell phone (281) 380 – 1832

Email address DSattler@tvmanonline.com**Congregational Demographics**

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Clergy 1 Lay professionals 3 Secretarial 1

Average worship attendance: 86

Average Sunday school attendance: Adults – 20 to 30; Young Adults – 4; School Aged – 13

**Indicate the type of community in which your congregation is located (is it small town, small city, suburban, large city, farming, industrial, etc.).**

Joy Lutheran Church is located in one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, Fort Bend County, and, according to the US Census, among the most diverse counties in the nation. Fort Bend County is a mix of communities, cosmopolitan to rural, offering residents options and opportunity. Joy’s mailing address is the city of Richmond, but most of us tell “outsiders” that we are in Houston. Houston is the fourth largest city in the US and offers all the amenities of a large sophisticated urban area---renown hospitals, two major airports, several universities, national sports teams, and one of the best theatre districts in the country.

Richmond is the county seat and has the unique designation of being one of the first cities in the Republic of Texas in 1837. Located on Interstate 69 and US 90 Alternate it is easy to access all the area’s services while enjoying the feel of small town USA. Richmond is a bedroom community with a population of approximately 12,000, located about 30 miles southwest of Houston on the Brazos River. Home to several good museums, close to state parks, excellent restaurants and convenient shopping, the Richmond area is comprised of many master planned communities with all the conveniences that these afford. Children in the area attend either the Fort Bend Independent School District or Lamar Consolidated Independent School District. Each of these districts have superior educational programs and facilities with schools located in the subdivisions. Texas offers a low cost of living, no State Income Tax, and great weather for the majority of the year.

Joy Lutheran Church hosts the Ministerium of the Southeast Mission District each month. In addition to Joy, there are six other NALC churches in the area:

First Evangelical Church (Houston – 26 miles away); Oromo Evangelical Church (Houston – 26 miles away); Church of the Living God—Chinese (Houston – 20 miles away); Chinese Lutheran Church (Houston – 18 miles away); St. Paul Lutheran (Rosenberg – 6 miles away); Peace Lutheran Church (Rosenberg – 4.5 miles away).

**Describe the congregation’s ethnic composition and age distribution.**

Ages range from 2 to 90+ with a median age of 51; 94% Caucasian

**Does the congregation have a clear vision for mission — a clear and shared understanding of where God is leading you? If so, state it as succinctly as possible.**

Joy Lutheran Church’s mission statement can be summarized as “JOY to the World” which means Jesus and Others before You. We believe that it is our mission to reach out to others in our community and beyond for Christ through obedience to the Great Commission. This is achieved, with God’s help, through faith, prayer, worship, Bible study, the development of relationships and service. We ascribe to the idea of PoWeR SuRGe as outlined by Michael Foss: Pray, Worship, Read the Bible, Serve, Relationships, and Give.

**What are the primary goals of your congregation?**

Joy supports the core values of the NALC to be Christ centered, mission driven, traditionally grounded and congregationally focused and uses that vision statement to provide direction for all ministries. Congregational members are encouraged to initiate and support local ministries as well as to bring these to the attention of the church. In addition, one of our goals is to create an environment that is welcoming to families and provides them a spiritual “home”.

**Describe your congregation’s worship practice (liturgy, hymns, vestments, music, hymnals, and frequency of Holy Communion).**

Worship at Joy follows the historic Ordo at both worship services. The fullness of Word and Sacrament has been celebrated every Sunday and on many festival days for 20-years. It is also present at Church weddings (some in other locations) for disciples of Joy who are getting married. It has been the norm for Church funerals for many years.

Both worships utilize the full range of liturgical readings from the Revised Common Lectionary, normally using (but not limited to) the English Standard Version of the Scriptures.

The early worship utilizes all liturgies from the Lutheran Book of Worship and Setting Five from With One Voice, alternating settings depending upon the liturgical season. Hymnody is from the LBW, WOV, SBH, LSB and ELW. Depending upon the vocal ability of the presider, sung Mass is utilized during the seasons of Christmas and Easter and on festival Sundays, with spoken (low Mass) as an option. The Psalmody normally includes the Psalm Refrain with a cantor doing the verses, but various Psalm tones have been used either in unison or antiphonally during some seasons or portions thereof.

The late worship observes the Ordo in a spoken form, utilizing various litanies as well as more contemporary music for the processional, Hymn of Praise, Gospel Acclamation, Hymn of the Day, Offering/Offertory, Sanctus, Agnus Dei and distribution songs with an abbreviated song as the final mission song.

**Describe your congregation’s Christian education ministry.**

Joy’s education ministry is very intentional and is coordinated by the FDIC (Faith Development In Christ) committee. The committee oversees the various programs and is constantly reevaluating the needs of the congregation and making adjustments as appropriate. Currently, these programs include Sunday School for Toddlers through College Age as well as adult Bible Study between Sunday morning services. The adult classes have been taught by the pastor. In addition, men’s and women’s Bible study sessions are offered during the week throughout the year, taught by laypeople. First communion and confirmation are led by both the pastor and laypeople. Vacation Bible School occurs during the evenings for one week in the summer and is intergenerational in scope. In the past, student counselors from a Lutheran camp assisted in the implementation of VBS. Orientation for new members, as well as studies that review our Lutheran faith, are made available to adults on an as needed basis.

**Describe the congregation’s current activities for mission and outreach.**

Many of our ministries have been created by individuals or groups that are passionate to serve others, while some are shared ministry with the community and beyond. Many of these have been in existence for years, but Joy nurtures and encourages the development of new ministries anytime the Lord puts it on our hearts. Joy is always open to explore the possibilities of any new ministry.

**NALC Disaster Relief** - NALC churches in the Richmond area have a local distribution center that collects, packages, and donates disaster kits to families both in our area and across the country. We gather and collect donations through VBS service projects and other campaigns. In late 2019, some of our own disciples were able to load up and distribute kits personally to some fellow coworkers in immediate need.

**Homeless Christmas** - This project was generated by a single family in our church in which goods and foods are collected and packaged for the Houston homeless population. On Christmas morning, several members and friends of the congregation join this family in distributing these items.

**It’s The Pitts Cook Team** - In partnership with a local cook off barbeque team (big thing in Texas!), Joy participates in activities that support veterans and at risk youth in FFA programs as needed.

**Prayer Shawls/Scarves Ministry** - Joy disciples and members of the community hand craft prayer shawls and scarves that are used as gifts to the homeless, shut-ins or anyone else in the community to share the love of Christ to those who may be hurting or grieving.

**Area Beach Dune Restoration** - For the past 20 years, the congregation and community neighborhoods donate, gather and then transport discarded Christmas trees to the Gulf Coast area beaches to assist in dune restoration.

**Helping Hands** - We collect non-perishable foods and toiletries for distribution by the local food pantry in the Richmond/Rosenberg area.

**Fort Bend Family Promise** -The mission of Fort Bend Family Promise is to meet the immediate needs of homeless families while empowering them to attain self-sufficiency. We provide meals monthly to the families that need these services.

**Prison Ministry** -One of our members who is an ordained Lutheran pastor meets regularly with prisoners at a local prison and shares with them the good news on how Christ can change their lives.

**Lunches of Love** - This is a local non-profit organization that helps end childhood hunger.

**Pregnancy Resource Center** - Joy supports the center with gifts of time, treasure and talents.

**Quilting Ministry** - Joy disciples, along with members of the community, gather together in fellowship to hand craft quilts for personal use or to be used as special gifts.

Additional ministries we provide or support: Big Heart Orphanage in Mexico; partnerships with the Oromo and Chinese Lutheran Churches; Vacation Bible School for children and adults open to the community; provide facilities for area Home Owner Associations, voting, and scout troops.

**The NALC is committed to moving away from an institutional understanding of the Church, to the biblical commission to be a community of followers of Jesus who focus on being disciples and making disciples. Which best describes your congregation’s understanding of this movement?**

 Totally unaware

 Have heard about it

 Have been involved personally

 ✓ Some in the congregation are involved, some aren’t

 Congregation understands, is on-board and involved

**List the *Top Five Things* your congregations hopes for in its next Pastor**

1. Faithful to Biblical teachings: We expect our pastor to deliver sermons based on God’s word; who can take us, as a congregation, to a deeper understanding of Biblical teachings through Bible study; who understands and can intentionally utilize the liturgy to enhance the worship experience.
2. Willing to shepherd and promote leadership among the disciples: We are very willing to be disciples, rather than just members, but we need someone who will encourage us to use the gifts we have been given and will help equip us to lead.
3. Interested in developing relationships within the church: We are not asking for our pastor to be our best friend, but rather to genuinely be interested in what is happening in our lives and to show compassion and care for the congregation as a whole, and individually.
4. Open and encouraging of outreach programs: We live in a very diverse community with many opportunities for evangelism. While we have quite a few programs started by individuals in the church, we believe we could do more to reach others. We are looking for someone with the energy and leadership to guide us.
5. Discerning as to when to lead and provide direction and when to delegate to others: We expect our pastor to provide appropriate, wise leadership and to work cooperatively with the lay leadership, making sure we stay focused on God’s word and open to the Holy Spirit’s direction.

**What were the three most significant events in your congregation’s history? Provide the years in which these events happened and why they are important to your congregation.**

1. 2002: Failed building fund. Much discussion and even plans were developed to renovate and expand our church facility. This had evolved from a review of our church’s needs and goal setting. However, we got off track and wound up with a grandiose plan that was totally unrealistic. After some angst and much prayer, it was determined that this was not the direction we needed to explore. What we learned was our ministries were not dependent on a building but rather on who we were in Christ.
2. August 2010: ELCA/NALC Split. The subject of breaking away from the ELCA was one that provided opportunities to reevaluate and reinforce our core values. In doing this, some internal conflict arose and we did lose some members. However, on the whole, the congregation was revitalized and we embraced the values of the NALC.
3. June 2014-January 2017: Intern Program. In 2013, our congregation accepted a proposal to train interns as part of their preparation for the ministry. Although this would be a substantial financial obligation as well as an adventure into the unknown, there was no hesitation. We were all in. What a wonderful experience this turned out to be for both the interns (we had three over the years) and for our congregation. God truly blessed us all in this journey.

**Has your congregation participated in the Congregational Workshop Preparatory to the Call Process?**

 **✓** YesNo

**What were the three most significant results of the workshop?**

We identified areas of strength, areas of weakness and made a list of things we needed to improve. About 60 people participated in the workshop on a Saturday and everyone was very positive about the experience.

**Describe the nature and extent of any significant current or recent conflict in the congregation. Is this conflict resolved, or ongoing? If resolved, how was it resolved?**

Any conflict that occurs is usually resolved by the pastor and leadership team behind the scenes and with the parties involved. Most of the time the congregation is not aware of any issues.

**How does your congregation handle conflict/tension? Which of the following do you think best describes your congregation?**

 As a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness.

 ✓ As a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides. Some have left our church because of conflict.

 Conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it.

 Painful experience with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience.

 We have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background.

 Open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it.

 Other (describe)…...

**What was the nature of the relationship between your last pastor and the congregation? Positive? Struggling? Cooperative? Tense?**

We were very fortunate to have had a pastor for 20 years with whom we had a cooperative and positive relationship. The congregation grew under his leadership in understanding Biblical teachings, honoring the sacraments, and the importance of following the Lutheran liturgy. Our former pastor has retired and is desirous of retaining his membership. We also have three other retired pastors that worship regularly with us and have filled in as necessary. Even though we have had the same pastor for 20 years, the congregation is open to change and new avenues for growth.

**How did your council/congregational leaders work together with your last pastor?**

 Leadership is shared, with shared decision-making

 Pastor makes important decisions

 ✓ Council makes decisions with pastoral input

 Council makes decisions without pastoral input

**Is your pastor a member of council with:**

 ✓ Voice Vote

**Congregational finances**

Total budget for last fiscal year: $342,544.00 (budgeted); $313,114.38 (actual)

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: $16,579.02

Other benevolence: $38,236.93

Total debt of the congregation: $95,839.63

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: $51,281.81

**When the Congregational Vacancy List is updated, a short paragraph (3-4 sentences) is included announcing each congregation’s ministry. If you wish, your call committee may compose that summary, realizing it may be edited/formatted as needed.**

Joy Lutheran Church was founded in the 1980s as a mission outreach program in the Richmond, Texas area. Located just outside the Houston metropolitan, Richmond maintains a small town feel while having easy access to the amenities of a large city. The congregation at Joy is composed of 160 members, with an average Sunday attendance around 86 members. Our current pastor of 20 years has retired and we are looking forward to the opportunity to grow in our faith with a new shepherd. Our strengths lie in our faithfulness and hunger for the Word as well as in the unity of fellowship and mission.

Completed by: The Call Committee of Joy Lutheran Church Date: March 10, 2020