

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

New Joy In Indiana Westfield, Indiana



New Joy Lutheran Church in Westfield, Ind., is a congregation that works to be a place where life and faith come together. **With the help of an ELCA grant, the Reverend Connie Thomson began knocking on thousands of doors.**

Soon, New Joy Lutheran Church was born. It is so named because many people were new to church or at new stages in their lives and seeking the joy of God. **The intent of ministry at New Joy is for everyone to feel like a partner** in the process and to shepherd each other in order to serve in the community together.

After years of meeting in homes and a school, New Joy moved into the first phase of its new building last summer. Yet, the **focus of the congregation** has not been about building buildings, but rather **building Christian faith and meaningful relationships**. "We don't want to be tied to a structure," says Thompson. "One of the most moving moments for me was at the groundbreaking. We held worship on a grassy acre and then moved over to the field and stood in the shape the building would be. There we held hands and prayed the Lord's Prayer, anointed the area of the communion table with oil, and then everyone turned a shovelful of dirt where the communion table will stand. It was symbolic of the unity of effort that New Joy represents."

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit www.elca.org/stories.
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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