

WIND SWEEP

Monthly Newsletter

April 2026

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

“So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” -Mark 16:8

Reading scripture is one of my deepest privileges. I come back to texts again and again only to find that it says something wholly new and different to me each time. This single verse has had that effect on me. It's the original ending of the Gospel of Mark, what comes after having been edited in by an unsatisfied early Christian community. I wish they hadn't. I wish they'd sat with all of the possibilities of this unsatisfactory ending and the discomfort it brings and said yes to that being our relationship with God. We wrestle all the time with pain and suffering, evil and division, brokenness and injustice. Why not wrestle with our opportunities and failures in telling people about the good news of Jesus for all those situations and more? Why not wrestle with how God calls us to account... and invites us in.

Just consider this:

Because the women flee and say nothing to anyone, we are invited into the story. It hasn't been told, so we must do the telling! It's a brilliant tactic our speech and communication teachers would praise to wrap your listener in and certainly true of Mark 16:8. I can imagine an early teller of this story standing surrounded by a crowd and ending with those words only to watch and wait as all of the repercussions washed over the hearers.

And then, consider this:

Reading Mark 16:8 this time, I can't shake that we are the women. We know the story. We've seen the amazing power of Jesus in our lives and in our world. And, we don't say anything about it. We don't share our faith with our friends or family. We skip devotions and wish we read the Bible, but we don't actually make the change. . We think Spirit of Joy is a great community we'd like others to know about and have a part in, but we don't tell the story and make the invitation. We let our fear of judgment or disapproval win the day. Why?

I think:

There are very few of us who choose discomfort. If its getting in shape (I didn't until I ran out of options), wrestling with an idea that challenges our worldview, or making a career change that better fits us and our desires. For me, moving past those discomforts always takes time, preparation, and baby steps. And, then, I fail (grace!). So, what can we do to prepare ourselves to tell the story? Check in during this season after Easter. April 12 and 19 we're going to hear Peter's elevator speech for Jesus (more on p. 3). Jump into the challenge to read the entire New Testament (p. 9) . Or, just try one small thing, invite a friend to worship on Mother's Day. Be not afraid!



~ Pastor Eric

Strategic Visioning @ SoJ

The information gathering phase of the Strategic Visioning process is done. Thank you to the more than 20 individuals who sat for interviews with our team, the more than 70 who completed our survey, and the more than 60 individuals who attended cottage meetings (we don't know yet how many attended the retreat on March 28, but we're grateful to you, too!). Our next steps will be to do the work of bringing together your insights for the use of the Leadership Team and Staff. The April Leadership Team meeting will see our first draft of findings and recommendations. In May, we'll have the full report available in publication and help dissect it for Leadership Team. Then, a couple of things will happen: First, your staff will take the ideas from Leadership and begin to lay out a plan for implementation. Then, we'll bring that plan back to you all in the form of newsletter articles, brochures, and a feature in the fall Core Values Sermon Series. Then, our work will begin in earnest.

The challenge of strategic visioning is not information gathering or clarifying priorities, but lifting the findings up consistently over time so that each one of them is a centerpiece of our way forward

together as Spirit of Joy. You can help us! Ask your Leadership and Staff. Read the information that's shared. Look for hints of how and where we're living it out. Let's not do all this work for it to grow dust in a file drawer! Let's use it to be the best Spirit of Joy we can be!



Join us for Visioning Retreat

Saturday, April 18

9:00AM-Noon

Timeline

December 2025– Team Formation and Information Gathering

Jan-Mar– Information Gathering (Individual Interviews, Survey, and Cottage Meetings)

Mar-April– Congregation Wide Visioning Retreat

April-May: Formulation of Findings and Recommendations

Summer-Fall 2026: Implementation

What's Happening in Worship @ SoJ

"Washed by Grace, Held by Promise"

Our theme for the season after Easter is "Washed by Grace, Held by Promise". Your Sound of Joy Director and Choir Accompanist, Bella Kumagai, brought a number of suggestions for the name and your Passionate Worship Team massaged it into place. The team's comments were, "It feels like a hug. It's comforting. It never let's go." Through the season we will begin each service by remembering our baptism. We will chant the Psalm reading. Sing a contemporary gospel acclamation. And, our sermon series will focus on the readings from Acts.

The season starts with Peter's sermon in Acts 2. Christian commentators often call it the "perfect elevator speech for Jesus". The rest of the weeks take us through the early church's call to Christian living and invite us to take seriously the Great Commission of Matthew 28, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." The last week before Pentecost comes with a vivid reminder and promise. We will be witnesses, whether we want to or not. What will people see in you?



WE CAN SOUND BETTER

CONCERT & FUNDRAISER FOR THE SOUND SYSTEM

SUNDAY, MAY 17

9:30 Worship (One Service)

10:30 Concert Featuring SoJ Musicians

2026 Featured Ministry Partners



Charis Ministry Partners is a non-profit, faith-based outreach organization founded in 2009 by 13 local Lutheran (ELCA) congregations. It primarily serves individuals and families in need by providing food and household necessities.



FOOD TO YOU

Food to You is also known as the mobile food pantry because it's in four different locations every month. Food to You is a way to get groceries to those who need them, by distributing them in the neighborhoods where the need is



NECESSITIES FOR NEIGHBORS

Necessities for Neighbors provides help with household items not covered by Snap. These are items that many take for granted but are necessities for healthy living.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Spirit of Joy has two potential seats and one vote on the Charis Board. Lori Berdahl is currently serving as our representative.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Deliver Meals on Mondays
10:30am - 12:30pm

Want to join the rotation?

Contact Suzanne DeBoom (605-251-5396) or church office.

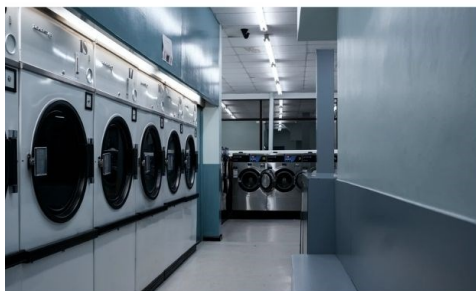


Are you looking for a worthwhile community service project? Meals on Wheels could use more people to help deliver meals to shut-ins. This would involve about two hours on a Monday once every three months. Contact Suzanne DeBoom for more information.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

LAUNDRY WITH LOVE

THE LAUNDROMAT COMPANY
701 N Cliff



Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups



SPIRIT OF JOY PRESCHOOL

Caring Community • Active Learning • Faithful Hearts

Preschool Listening Sessions

April 19: 10am

April 29: 7pm

Galilee Room

Join us to learn about the operation of our preschool and provide us feedback towards its future. We need your input.

April Calendar - Join Us! *Wednesday nights at 8PM*

- 1st - **NO Youth Group for Holy Week**
- 8th - Spiritual Wellness
- 15th - Wellness Wheel Wrap-up
- 22nd - **Earth Day Service Project**
- 29th - End of Year Party

Youth Group



Faith Formation



Adult Sunday School

This year's adult education will follow closely with our Bible in a Year Program. Each week will be an independent overview of an entire book or books of the Bible. Come regularly.



- April 12: Charis Ministries Forum
- April 19: Romans
- April 26: Paul's Letters
- May 3: General Letters and Revelation

Brewed Theology | Monday, 4/20 7PM @ Jack Rose Social

BREW EDTHE OLOGY

The Myth of Christian Self Help: The "self-help" industry is huge. As one of our Homework sources indicates, it's big enough that it warrants observation as an area of industry. And why not? Who doesn't want to improve themselves somehow? Increasing our physical, mental, or emotional fitness or prowess (if not the act of actually work involved...) is appealing. Isn't it? So, what about faith? Christianity (and religion, broadly) has its own niche in this realm, after all. Stop by a bookstore, and you might find covers with smiling authors or serene scenes promising the best several steps to wholeness, happiness, groundedness, or spirituality-ness. You might find a whole section of books in a store, or online. But what are they promising? And what can they do for us? What can we do?

Find more information and the pre-reading at spiritofjoy.net/signups.

BIBLE in a year



BibleProject

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13

Join us

- Commit to reading your Bible 15-20 min. a day (**beginning 4/24!**)
- Receive an overview video from BibleProject for each new book
- Reading Plan & Grace provided!

Sign up today!

READ THE NEW TESTAMENT!



spiritofjoy.net/signups

Kickoff Event
featuring
Dr. Richard Swanson
April 19 @ 5PM

You are invited...

The 3rd Annual SoJ Endowment Celebration



Sunday, April 26, 10am

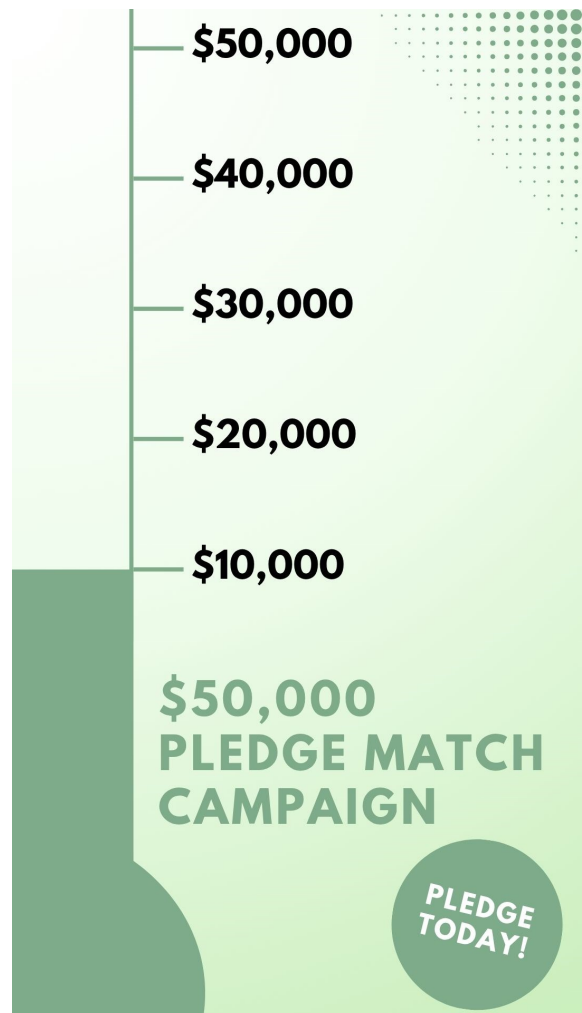
**Give thanks. Learn. Be inspired.
Give for a brighter future together.**

The Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) is planning to distribute approximately \$10,000 to unbudgeted ministry needs at SoJ this year. This will be the first distributions since the Fund was created three years ago which is extremely exciting. The current Fund balance is \$146,000. The MEF Committee has set a goal of \$250,000 by the end of the year so this level of giving back is sustainable annually ($\$250,000 \times 4\%$ annual distribution rate = \$10,000).

To provide a catalyst, we would like to *challenge partners to commit pledges towards a \$50,000 Match Campaign by Celebration Sunday, April 26* that when matched would raise a total of \$100,000 meeting our goal of \$250,000 by year end. Please consider pledging now to SoJ's future!

Mission Endowment Fund Balance

Previous YE Balance \$141,606.87
2026 YTD \$5,223.78
Total \$146,830.65



Holy Week @ SoJ

March 29 - April 5



Holy Week Worship

Palm Sunday

March 29 | 8:45 & 11 a.m.
Procession of Palms,
& Holy Communion

Mundy Thursday

April 2 | 6:30 p.m.
First Communion &
Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday

April 3 | 6:30 p.m.
Led by High School Youth

Easter Sunday

April 5 | 7, 8:45 & 11 a.m.
Festival Worship

Financials through February 2026

Checking Account:

General Fund	\$35,418.50
Building Fund	-\$3,344.46
Donor Restricted	\$138,191.64
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00

Savings Accounts:

Building	\$171,794.60
<u>Donor Restricted</u>	<u>\$41,433.29</u>
Total Cash Balance	\$388,053.67

	February 2024	February 2025	February 2026
Attendance	1362	568	1107
General Offering	\$ 62,383.97	\$ 52,350.77	\$ 54,167.62
Building Offering	\$ 17,300.29	\$ 2,816.54	\$ 2,572.18

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$169,797.36
<u>Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry</u>	<u>\$163,068.62</u>
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	\$6,728.74



SPIRIT OF JOY PRESCHOOL

Caring Community • Active Learning • Faithful Hearts

Preschool Registration & Referrals

It may seem like spring has just barely here but we are preparing for Fall 2026 already! Preschool Registration is now open. Many families have already registered, both new and returning students--- there is room for you, too!

When you enroll at Spirit of Joy Preschool, your family becomes a part of the community that values active, faith-filled learning. Children enjoy weekly age-appropriate themes And Chapel times that explore math, science, literacy, Bible stories, social skills and more.

New family referrals are welcome and rewarded with a thank you gift for both the new family and those who refer the preschool. All are welcome, feel free to share this opportunity with friends and family. There are several ways:

1. Visit our webpage for a video, photos & more information at:
spiritofjoy.net/information-registration/
2. Follow the preschool on Facebook for up-to-date photos, testimonials, and events.
[Facebook.com/spiritofjoypreschool](https://www.facebook.com/spiritofjoypreschool)
3. Come in for a tour- call today to schedule a visit. We would love to meet you and show off the beautiful space. 605-333-2004
4. Share a brochure, found on the preschool board near the kitchen and on the Welcome Center

Dates to Know

April 3 & 6 No Preschool – Easter Break

May 20 Yearend Program – All are Welcome!

*Watch for Playground & Popsicle Dates coming in July & August! A time for children considering preschool, graduates, and current students come to play together on the preschool playground.

March Stories...

Each day, preschool begins with a prayer to welcome God into this space and thank God for all the ways we are provided for by God. It is a joy to see the world through the eyes of young children that are discovering their world. (They have been on earth for just three-four spring seasons after all.) The amazement is boldly proclaimed and shared with all.

“It’s a rainbow!!! Wow!!”
proudly creating an art project

“I did it!! I see the rainbow!”
using a prism and flashlight

“I love red- it is the best!”
Giggling at colorful pom poms
bouncing on the floor- everywhere.

“Look, it’s a flower!!” on signs of spring walk

“How do we make a snowman? Oh, ok... Let me try!”

In March, preschool students have been learning about Noah’s Ark, rainbows and colors, community helpers, animals, Dr. Seuss stories paired with rhyming and alliteration themes, as well as Spring weather- always changing.

Noah’s Ark- The Bible story about Noah’s Ark and his family was discovered in all areas of learning- math puzzles, rainbow creations with prisms, paper rainbows, building and boarding our own pretend ark as well as becoming a human rainbow during Chapel (thank you, Miss Michele!). Finally, some real zoo animals came for a visit- it was amazing to see the creatures God has made- parrot feathers, skunk fur, cheetah fur, snakes, lizards and turtles, too. WOW!

Community Helpers- How do adults serve one another- doctors, dentists, teachers and more. As a part of this theme, children also cared for their neighbor, writing notes of thanks to Spirit of Joy’s garbage collectors, mail carriers, church staff, and more for the many ways they help others. Families also joined the Laundry with Love quarter collection with Faith Formation students.

Preschool children and staff enjoyed the beautiful church campus building snowmen and walking the grounds for signs of spring- all in one week. March weather brings all sorts of fun!



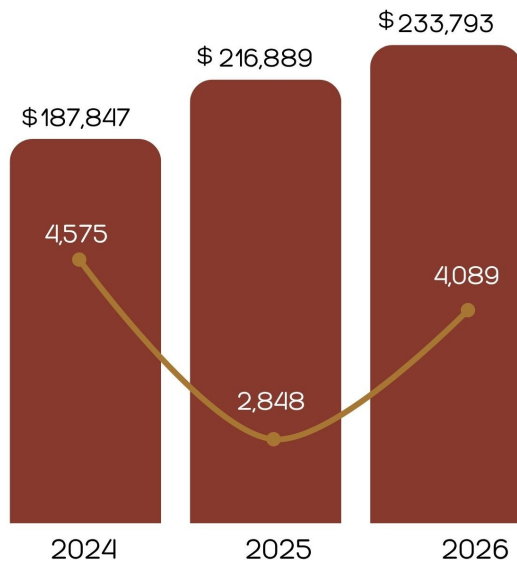
FORWARD TOGETHER as Spirit of Joy

TAKING A LOOK AT Q1 2026



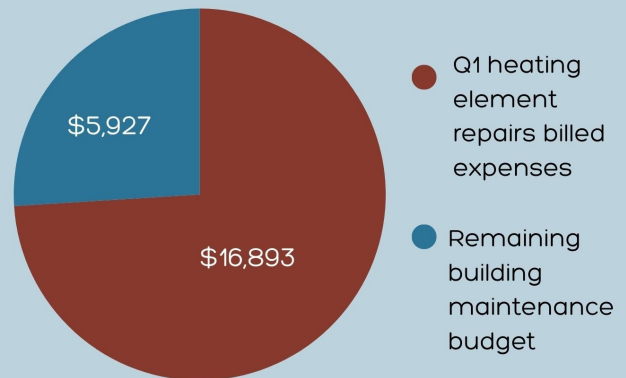
ATTENDANCE & GIVING

● Attendance in Q1 ● Giving in Q1



SOMETHING UNEXPECTED

HVAC Repairs



Future replacement of worship space heat exchanger: \$22,000 estimate

VOLUNTEER IMPACT

In the first quarter of 2026, Spirit of Joy volunteers gave over 3,900 hours of their time.
(that's the equivalent of nearly \$130,000!)

Learn more

at spiritofjoy.net/signups or stop in to the church office.

Thank you!

April is National Volunteer Month, and Spirit of Joy is blessed by so many volunteers.

Thank you to those who volunteer their time and talents to support our ministry.

We are called to be generous in every way. *2 Corinthians 9:11*

PICKLEBALL

Remedy Brewing Co. (401 E 8th St)

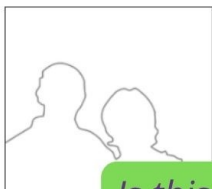
**THURSDAY, APRIL 9
6 - 8 PM**

\$5/ADULT | KIDS ARE FREE | DONATIONS WELCOME!

sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups



**SUN. 4/19
&
WED. 4/22**



Is this you and your family in our Church Directory?

Help Us Keep the Directory Current

Download the Church Directory

scan here for directions



Update/Add your picture at our Spring Fling!

photographer
available



sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Update your information right from your phone!



Creation Care Corner

“Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” John 4:13-14

Have you heard about Cowboy Bob’s Fill ‘er Up Jamboree?! The Creation Care Team is sponsoring a fun **CONTEST** to promote our new water bottle filling station. It began on Sunday, March 22nd and goes through mid April. Starting March 22nd, every time you fill up your reusable water bottle at the “watering hole” you can sign up to win one of the prizes pictured below:



The prize on the left is for partners 19 and older and contains a reusable shopping bag, Eco Clean laundry sheets, a Swedish dish cloth, a reusable Owala water bottle, a refillable multipurpose cleaning spray from Terra Shepherd Boutique, and a \$25 gift card for Terra Shepherd Boutique.

The prize on the right is for partners 18 and younger and contains a reusable shopping bag, a reusable Owala water bottle with some flavored packets, fun stickers for water bottles, etc., a fahlo bracelet that tracks a turtle, and a \$25 gift card to Uptown Cheapskate.

This is a fun way to promote refilling your reusable water bottle. You can be a difference maker in the fight against single-use plastic. According to the Container Recycling Institute, every year around 50 billion plastic water bottles are purchased, which averages to about 13 bottles per month per person or 4 bottles a week for regular water bottle drinkers. And after that, these bottles end up in landfills, are incinerated, or end up floating in our oceans or breaking down somewhere into microplastics that harm our ecosystems, working their way into the food we eat. (The study of microplastics is a new field so some of the studies have been flagged as flawed; however, because the field is so new, microplastics are determined to be a significant health concern to our bodies and our environment, yet more studies need to be completed under more rigorous and reputable standards.)



COWBOY BOB'S FILL 'ER UP JAMBOREE

*Refill, Refresh, Reuse.
Enjoy fresh water and reduce plastic waste!*

COWBOY BOB SAYS:

Every time you fill your water bottle, put your name on one of the slips of paper—there's one for adults and one for kids up to age 19—and drop it into the bag.

On April 19, Cowboy Bob will draw a name from each group for a prize!

Creation Care Sunday | April 19

Come help us celebrate our new Water bottle filler

Never lose your water bottle again! Bring your metal water bottle to church to have your name etched by DTDesigns. Etching will be \$10 and take less than 5 minutes.

DTDesigns will be onsite from 9:45-11:00AM.