

WIND SWEPT

Spirit of Joy

Monthly Newsletter

August 2026

I shared last year that August is the busiest season for your staff at SoJ. All of the planning is coming to a head, orders are being placed, details discussed, and many of our program year activities have begun. But, that work isn't limited to staff! Roughly 40 volunteers will step into the roles of Confirmation Mentors and Guides, Children of Joy Teachers, High School Youth Leaders, and Little Lambs Leaders. The Budget Team has begun its work. The Women's Retreat Team is driving towards a fantastic Saturday together in September. The Worship volunteers needed for each week doubles on September 13.

All that doesn't mean that there haven't been a small army of volunteers this summer.

- Bob Jenson, Jared Ducommun, and the boys scraped cracks for the parking lot seal.
- Arlene Brandt-Jenson, Gene Benson, Lori Tripp, Chad Fickbohm, Jim McAdaragh, Deb Harlan, Arlen Int'Veld, Brad Bass, and Gary DeBoom redid the landscape mulch around our parking lot.
- Emily Geraets, Mike Haddican, Barbara Lease, Amy Mark, Mindy Dold, Lil Johnston, Marcy Becker, and Gene Benson brought together our largest middle school Engage to Change Camp yet.
- Donna Ver Wey, Lori Tripp, Cathy Froke, Arlene Brandt-Jenson, Bob Jenson, Pam Zimmer, Susan Obermoller, and Mark Froke are often at the building working in the gardens both when I arrive and when I depart. The grounds are beautiful!
- Your Core Ministry Teams meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month. Some 30 people are involved in the decision making process we share. Each one is busy and active pointing us towards our shared future.
- Your Leadership Team meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month. That's 10 folks who are bringing all the parts of the ministry together and setting the direction for our next few years.
- There are more than 20 partners who lead us in song on Sundays and Wednesdays.

And, yet there is still more opportunity for Shared Ownership of our work.

- We need additional garden help.
- We need additional Sunday screen operators.
- We need teachers for Children of Joy.
- We need coffee servers and worship greeters.
- We need more people willing to help on building and grounds projects.

In short? WE NEED YOU!

Kickoff is Sunday, September 13 and Wednesday, September 16. That's the easiest opportunity to join all of the many ways you help us carry out our mission and ministry. Check out the table. Sign up. Help us be the best version of SoJ we can be!



~ Pastor Eric

Strategic Visioning @ SoJ

This month your Core Ministry Teams (Bold Service, Passionate Worship, Lifelong Faith Formation, Radical Hospitality, and Extravagant Generosity) will begin identifying potential goals for Leadership Teams final consideration.

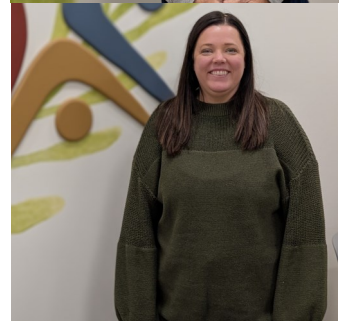
Visioning Team members will accompany the process making sure that the conversation and end product reflect your input.



Worship
Relationships
Sustainability
We're on it!

Team Meeting Night
Monthly, 2nd Tuesday (except July)

Leadership Team Meeting Night
Monthly, 3rd Thursday (except July)



What's Happening in Worship @ SoJ

History of the ELCA

Our Formation: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was formed in 1988 by the merger of three Lutheran bodies: the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

Lutheran Beliefs: The ELCA is grounded in God's promise in the Scriptures to comfort, accompany, and redeem. As Lutherans, we believe that God works through both law and gospel, calling us to serve our neighbors and providing mercy, hope, and joy through Jesus Christ in modern, often unsettling times.

Lutheran Theology: Our church's teaching centers on God's unreserved mercy in Christ: sinners are justified by grace through faith, not works. Faith is living and active, born of Scripture's promise. This church dares to proclaim God's mercy and God's desire for well-being for the church and the world.

The People: The ELCA is a church of shared leadership. Across nearly 8,400 congregations, 65 synods and the churchwide organization, we live our faith together, guided by the Holy Spirit, Lutheran tradition and those called to serve with wisdom, care and conviction.

Spirit of Joy

Our Formation: At the urging of Sioux Falls area congregations, the South Dakota Synod, and the ELCA's Division for Outreach, ELCA's Mission Investment Fund purchases 11 acres of land near 69th Street and Western Avenue in March of 1996. Pr. Jeff Eisele was appointed mission developer in June of 2000. After five years of worship at The Good Samaritan Society the first portion of the building was dedicated in February 2006.

Our Purpose: is to WELCOME people into a community of followers of Jesus Christ; GROW with one another in faith and hope in Him; SEND out one another as Jesus' compassionate servants in the world.

Our Values and Key Messages

Passionate Worship: Jesus Christ is the way to life: We believe Jesus is Lord (John 20:28), and that He has most clearly revealed who He is by His suffering love on a cross. Following Jesus is our first priority, and the way to experience life that is abundant (John 10:10), joy-filled (John 15:11), and everlasting (John 3:16).

Radical Hospitality: All people matter to God and so they matter to us: Jesus came into the world to offer grace and mercy to all persons no matter what path they have chosen in life (Luke 15:1-32; 19:10). We are committed to obeying Jesus' New Commandment (John 13:34-35) and to reaching

out with the unconditional and everlasting love of Jesus to all people, just as they are, without regard to race, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, lifestyle, or anything else.

Lifelong Faith Formation: Following Jesus is a life-long, growing experience: When we meet God through the love of Christ, we are changed and impelled towards spiritual maturity (Philippians 3:13-14). For this reason we strive to bring people into an ever-growing relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19). This growth happens most often through participation in personal devotion, community worship, and small groups.

Extravagant Generosity: Every Jesus follower is called to and gifted for ministry: We believe God calls every believer to ministry, and gives every believer special gifts and abilities for faithful living and serving (1 Corinthians 12). We are committed to helping people discern their call, realize and develop their spiritual gifts and abilities, and recognize opportunities to serve as the Body of Christ in the world.

Bold Service: God is continually at work in us to transform the world: We believe God is at work here and now, through the Holy Spirit, to empower and equip us for carrying out our mission (John 14:26, Acts 2:1-42). We are committed to prayerfully receiving direction from the Spirit who inspires Christ-like living, bold and innovative serving, and a changed world.

Mutual Ministry Team



Mindy Dold



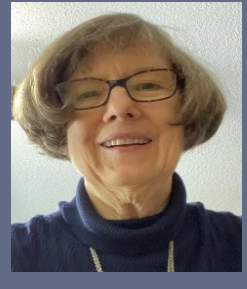
Bob Chell



Brian Oyen



Ron Risty



Mary Tranberg

The Mutual Ministry team was launched earlier this year and members were jointly appointed by the President and Rostered Ministers. The terms are two years with no more than three members to be appointed each successive year (to allow for continuity), and one yearly seat is reserved for the Past-President to act as a bridge to the Leadership Team. Our team is comprised of individuals with various backgrounds across the congregation and each brings a unique skillset. As a team, we have spent our initial meetings getting to know each other, defining roles and responsibilities, and identifying routines and norms. We have also gotten to spend quality time with Pastor Eric discussing joys, stresses, and how we can best support mutual ministry across Spirit of Joy.

In thoughtful consultation with the Leadership Team, we have determined that our team's focus will be to:

- Serve as a source of support for the rostered leaders (called pastors and deacons) in times of personal or professional stress.
- Serve as a "focus group" representative of the congregation, as leaders share ideas for ministry and seek to assess how best to accomplish what is being proposed.
- Support the rostered leaders' need for spiritual self-care, compensation, maternity-paternity leave, sabbaticals, and continuing education.
- Is alert to the early warning signs within a congregation of misunderstanding that may eventually lead to difficulty.

While our team is open to receiving positive and constructive feedback regarding our mutual ministry, we also wanted to reiterate the recommended process for providing feedback that was discussed in the recent congregation meeting:

- We are blessed with a talented, passionate and engaged team of staff that serves the needs of the congregation. Congregational members are encouraged to thank and recognize the contributions of the staff.
- It is important that congregation members feel comfortable communicating directly with the individuals involved when concerns arise.
- We encourage these conversations to take place one-on-one whenever possible, as direct dialogue fosters understanding and healthy relationships within our community.
- If members do not feel comfortable addressing concerns directly, we welcome them to bring those concerns to the congregation leadership team president, or the staff member's supervisor.
- When engaging in these conversations, we also encourage everyone to refrain from judgment, to extend grace to one another and listen to another's perspectives with an open mind.

We look forward to the additional layer of support our team will provide to our rostered leaders into this next and future seasons.

Blessings,

The Mutual Ministry Team

family fun night

6:30-8PM

ON THE ROAD...
TOGETHER

Wed, August 5



- * Camp-Style Worship *
- * Bounce House *
- * Ice Cream *
- * Craft *

Registration for Education at Spirit of Joy

Please fill out one form for each child participating in an education opportunity at Spirit of Joy. **This includes Children of Joy PreK-5 Grade, Confirmation 6th-10th Grade, High School Youth Group 9th-12th Grade.** Volunteer Opportunities included in the form for adults to participate. Please sign up where you would like to help – We Need You!

Save the Date:

Children of Joy begins Sunday, September 13 (returning to two services)

Wednesday programming begins September 16

Wednesday Worship, Children of Joy, Confirmation, Youth Group, Choir Rehearsal

Register Online: spiritofjoy.net/signups



Blessing of Students & Backpacks

Sunday, August 23 | 9:30AM Service

Students of all ages are welcome to bring their backpacks to worship that day!

Outreach Opportunities

Featured Ministry Partner: Horace Mann



Spirit of Joy serves alongside Asbury United Methodist as the Parent Teacher Organization for Horace Mann Elementary School. We collect school supplies, provide for the 'prize closet', give faculty and staff Christmas and year-end gifts, and help fund an annual play event for students.

Sunday, August 2, Jaci Pesicka, Principal of Horace Mann Elementary will be here during coffee hour to welcome us to the school year. Come hear how we can support their mission through prayer, Bold Service, and Extravagant Generosity.

School Wish List Collection will be available soon in the Gathering Space. Collection will run through the month of August.

The graphic has a bright yellow background. On the left, there is a logo featuring a black cross with a white outline. Inside the cross is a green shield with the words "CHURCH" and "The STREET" in white. To the right of the logo, the words "BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES" are written in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, the text "We have the supplies" is written in black, followed by "Calling all volunteers to help pack" in black, and "Thursday, August 6" in blue, and "10:00 AM | Shalom Center" in black. On the right side of the graphic, there is a blue backpack filled with various school supplies, including pencils, pens, a ruler, a compass, a protractor, a clock, and a pencil sharpener.

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES

We have the supplies
Calling all volunteers to help pack
Thursday, August 6
10:00 AM | Shalom Center



MONDAY
AUGUST 3RD
Hammocking 2-4pm
at Laurel Oaks Park

WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 12TH
Bonfire/Game Night
8-9:30pm at Spirit of Joy


AUGUST
With Spirit of Joy
High School Youth


SAVE THE DATE!
June 28 - July 2, 2027
ELCA Youth Gathering in
Minneapolis, MN
Stay tuned for more
details!



Meet SoJ's New Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation And Volunteer Coordinator

I grew up in Rosholt, SD before moving to Sioux Falls to attend USF for elementary education. I have spent time working with children's ministry, teaching preschool, and as a claims specialist for an eye doctor. My husband, Austin, and I bought a 105 year old house in Lennox last October. One of my favorite things to do is read on the front porch with our Pittbull, Jack! He gets all the attention in our house and his favorite toy is a fresh tennis ball! I am excited to begin working alongside the families and staff at SOJ!



The \$50,000 Matching Gift Campaign has received approximately \$32,000 in gifts. Any donations made to the Mission Endowment Fund will be matched by anonymous donors until the end of the year, doubling the impact up to \$100,000. A philanthropic challenge that offers a tremendous opportunity to meet our ultimate 2026 MEF goal of \$250,000. Please consider investing now in SoJ's future!

Mission Endowment Fund Balance

Previous YE Balance \$141,606.87

2026 YTD \$59,183.05

Total \$200,789.92



For more information on Mission Endowment Fund, visit:

spiritofjoy.net/mission-endowment-fund-2

Creation Care Corner

Let's talk e-biking! Have any of you had a chance to try an e-bike yet? They sure are a fun way to get around. Here are some fun facts about e-bikes to get you started:

- Pedal-assist electric bikes are the most popular. The electrical engine gives you some support when pedaling. Throttle e-bikes do all the work for you and you don't have to pedal (think like a scooter).
- Most e-bikes have advanced battery and charging systems and charge quickly. Some offer regenerative braking so they recharge the battery as the bike slows down.
- E-bikes have walk assistance if you need to walk your bike up a hill.
- They come with wireless capabilities.
- They are cost effective. You can use them for recreation, short shopping trips, or to get to work or other places. They can reach speeds up to 28 mph.
- They create zero emissions and save you money on gas.
- You still need to pedal, so you *are* still getting exercise, but the hills are a bit easier.



You may still have some questions about e-bikes. The rules vary from state to state and even communities. Here in Sioux Falls you do not need a license, registration, or insurance for the e-bike. South Dakota uses the 3-class e-bike system meaning Class 1 is pedal assist to 20 mph; Class 2 may use a throttle to 20 mph; Class 3 is pedal assist to 28 mph. Electric bike motor threshold is 750 W or less. A person must be at least 16 years of age to operate an e-bike and anyone under 18 must wear a helmet when operating an e-bike. Every passenger on an e-bike must wear a helmet regardless of age. E-bikes can be used on the bike trails in Sioux Falls but please use common sense and follow the rules of etiquette (stay to the right and when passing, pass on the left and give a heads-up to any walkers or other bikers you may be passing; slow down a bit around families).

All bicyclists are welcome on the roads. Car drivers, please pay attention. Bicyclists should ride in the bike lane and can ride side by side but if nearing the crowded car lane, then please revert to a single file line. Use signals of the road and wear reflective clothing. As always, helmets offer the best protection for your head. They are not required but are highly recommended.

Did you know that there is a business in Sioux Falls called Jaunt where you can download the app and find e-bikes near you? That way you can try them out and see our beautiful city at the same time. You can also rent e-bikes from the Sioux Falls Bicycle Company. Jaunt does not provide helmets; however, helmets do come with the e-bikes from SF Bicycle Company. Please visit their respective websites for more info and get out for a ride!! You can also go in groups if you like.

Now that you know a little more about e-bikes, we hope you are ready to try them out and explore Sioux Falls and all of God's creation.



"By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible." Hebrews 11:3 (NRSV)

ASK YOUR BURNING QUESTIONS...

spiritofjoy.net/signups



Scan the QR Code to ask
questions we can answer
on our weekly podcast.

Ask questions about:
Theology & The Bible
Worship & Faith
SoJ Values

Financials through June 2026

Checking Account:

General Fund	\$36,930.72
Building Fund	\$2,171.43
Donor Restricted	\$162,059.38
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00

-

Savings Accounts:

Building	\$134,887.81
<u>Donor Restricted</u>	<u>\$41,434.66</u>
Total Cash Balance	\$382,044.10

	June 2024	June 2025	June 2026
Attendance	1085	1079	844
General Offering	\$ 110,657.06	\$ 44,507.50	\$ 66,284.91
Building Offering	\$ 9,133.61	\$ 5,076.92	\$ 2,171.43

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$437,607.12
<u>Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry</u>	<u>\$428,871.08</u>
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	\$8,736.04

FORWARD TOGETHER

as

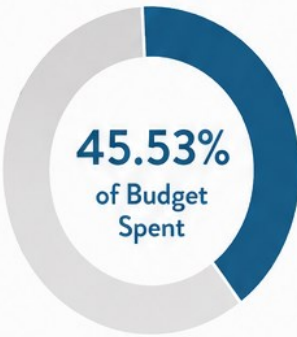
Spirit of Joy

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

MIDYEAR UPDATE | JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30, 2026

YTD EXPENSES VS. BUDGET

As of June 30, 2026



\$428,871.08
YTD Expenses

\$942,000
Annual Budget

On Track
for First Half



Spending is in line with our plan.
45.53% spent through the first half of 2026.

YEAR OVER YEAR COMPARISON

FIRST HALF 2025 VS. FIRST HALF 2026

ATTENDANCE



6,422
Q1-Q2 '25

7,249
Q1-Q2 '26

↑ +12.9%
Increase

GIVING (GENERAL FUND)



\$408,059.57
Q1-Q2 '25

\$437,595.86
Q1-Q2 '26

↑ +7.2%
Increase



More people. More generosity.
Together, we are growing in faith and impact.



FEATURED SPECIAL EXPENSE: NEW SOUND SYSTEM

This investment will enhance
worship and ministry for years to come.

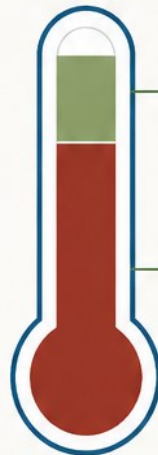
Thank you for making this possible!

PROJECT NEED
\$61,000
Original Goal



\$2,000
Additional Needed
(Unexpected Cost)

Total Need
\$63,000



TOTAL RAISED
\$73,000

Thank you!

EXTRA BLESSING: \$10,000

Will be reserved for future
sound system & technology needs.



Fully funded, unexpected costs covered,
and investing in the future of our ministry.



Together,
we make ministry
possible.

Your generosity—through your time,
talents, and financial gifts—helps
Spirit of Joy share God's love and
build a community where
everyone belongs.

*Thank you for
being part of
what God is
doing here!*



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

