

WIND SWEEP

Monthly Newsletter

January 2024

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. -Colossians 3:12-14



As I continue thinking and wondering about what it means for us to be "together" as Spirit of Joy ([Click here to see January's newsletter](#)) I find myself thinking about what it means to "love one another". It's February, so I'm thinking about Valentine's Day. And, I've got on my calendar to begin pre-marital

counseling with two couples getting married this summer as Spirit of Joy. So, the verses above popped to mind. Frequent wedding verses, they are part of a larger section in Paul's letter to the congregation in Colossae. He's offering to them a way to live given the pulls and attraction of the secular life in Asia Minor (Turkey). Central to that way of life is, yes, renunciation of certain teachings and practices, but more importantly, the radical and transformative practice of Christian love.

You see, as I think about what it means for us to be "together" in 2024, I find myself thinking far less about statements of belief or intellectual exercises, but about intentional practices of community. Expressions of love made for one another, for our community, because we believe in the one true God.

Dr. Marcus Borg said the following to Calvary Episcopal Cathedral in Memphis, Tennessee during a lunch series in March 2001:

"I want to comment very quickly on the ancient meanings of "credo" and of "believe." Credo is the word from which we get the word creed, and it's also the opening word of the Nicene Creed and the Apostle's Creed. Very strikingly,

the roots of the word in both Greek and Latin do not mean, I agree with my intellect that the following statements are true, but rather mean, I give my heart to, I give my self at its deepest level to. To what, to these statements? No. I give my heart to God. Which God? The creator of Heaven and Earth. I give my heart to Jesus. Which Jesus? The one who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate and so forth. These are statements of what I give my loyalty to.

*The pre-modern meaning of the word "believe." For many modern people it means believing something to be true, though there are reasons to think otherwise. If you go back to the English language before the Enlightenment, Shakespeare and before, the word "believe" invariably means "love." You see this in the Middle English word *believen*. That is where you get the modern English word "believe." *Believen* means to *belove*, so that ultimately, what you believe really means what you *belove*."*

In relationships, this means no matter how many times we say, "I love you" the words stand hollow without the physical acts of relationship, orientation, and care to back them up. And, it is a two way street, with both partners responsible for their expressions. The same is true in our relationship with God. We may say together, "I believe in God." Or, "I love God." But, the words are hollow without the physical acts of relationship, orientation, and care. God has given us the only begotten Son as a gift of grace and love.

So, this year, look for invitations to practice community in the name of your faith. Seek out opportunities to tell the people in your life that you love them as an expression of your beliefs. And, in loving one another, we will, *together*, love God. And, as always, remember that the community of the divine has chosen you, claimed you, and called you beloved.



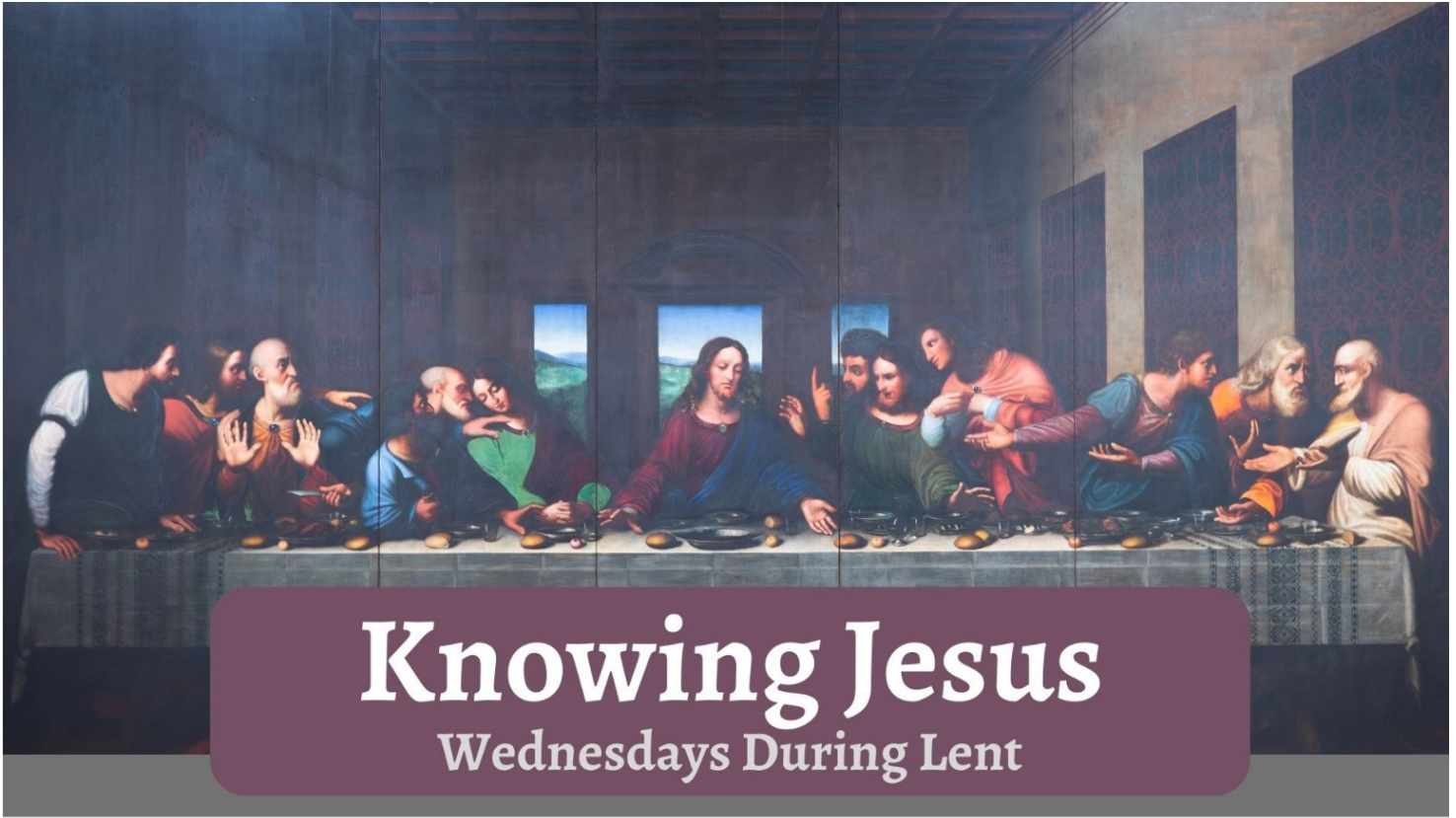
This year, your Worship Staff and Team is excited to invite you to join us for a two-part, 12 week series, titled “Washed and Fed”.

Refreshed

We begin when we welcome Rev. Jeff Backer of St. Dysmas Prison Congregation for Baptism of our Lord Sunday on January 7th. The first six weeks will focus on baptism. The font will move to the front center of our worship space and we’ll ask you to remember your baptism each and every time you come forwards to the table. Our liturgy, sermons, and music will all reinforce the tag line for those first six weeks, “Refreshed”.

The second half of the series will carry us through the season of Lent, ending on Palm Sunday. The most noticeable difference for this season will be the realignment of our liturgy. Lutheran worship has four parts: Gather, Word, Meal, and Send. For this season, we are going to ask you to join us in coming to the Meal first. Our idea and a centerpiece of our planning is that the gift of God’s grace is so important, so freeing, so vital, that we simply can not wait, and must Come to the Table as fast as possible. This hurry will bring us to The Table where our tagline for the final six weeks remind us that we are, “Refueled.”

Refueled



Knowing Jesus

Wednesdays During Lent

Each week of Lent we will read an interaction of Jesus with a different disciple. The first week we'll explore those first calls for disciples through the lens of Philip and Nathanael. Then, in the second week, we'll give thanks for the unexpected call of Matthew, the tax collector. From there we'll hear again the story of Peter, James, and John, awed by the appearance of Moses and Elijah as Jesus was transfigured before them. The fourth week of Lent we'll wonder what it means to be a friend of Jesus in light of the beloved disciple leaning against him to ask who would betray Jesus. And, finally, at our final gathering we'll ask ourselves for honesty as we consider how we betray Jesus in light of Judas' betrayal.

Grounded by space for deep breaths and comforting silence, each week will feature the scripture reading, a brief reflection, a question for personal reflection, and a number of hands-on faith practices, including Holy Communion.

Maundy Thursday (6:30 March 28), it will all come together as the Spirit of Joy Choir joins a company of our partners to embody the story of that last night among friends we call, The Last Supper. We'll celebrate our first communion milestone and remember the command to love one another as Jesus first loved us.

Join Us

Wednesdays, February 21 - March 20
Meal 5:30 | Worship 6:30

Congregational Life



Grief Support Group

First Meeting: Sunday, February 25 | 12:30PM

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Grief is not a disease; it is a natural response to a painful experience and there is no quick fix for what you are feeling. As your church, we want to offer you support, help strengthen, and encourage you on your grief journey. It doesn't matter where you are in your grief process or how many years it has been. You are welcome to join us. This will be an open group. Bring a friend/family.



Anniversary of Love & Marriage Milestone

We want to recognize, celebrate, and support families, couples, or loved ones through their faith journey. Join us Sunday, February 11 for a milestone that celebrates love of families, couples, children, or grandchildren. We will bless you in worship, create an opportunity for caring conversations with sticky notes and table talk. Remember that God, family, and your church loves you!



Social Justice Series: Climate Change

Sunday, February 18 | 5PM

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

You are invited to be a part of the ongoing social justice series at Spirit of Joy. Come and listen to Dr. Steven Matzner, a biology professor at Augustana College as he enlightens us on the issue of Climate Change and how the church can make a difference.

Pineridge Immersion Ministry

June 9-13 | Register online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Spirit of Joy partners are invited to sign up for the Pineridge Immersion Ministry trip. The cost of the trip is \$200 per person. A non-refundable deposit of \$100 and registration form (found online: spiritofjoy.net/signups) is due by March 1. Check your bulletin or email in the next 2-3 weeks about an informational session regarding the immersion ministry trip.

Milestone News

Preschool First Step Milestone | February 1 & 2

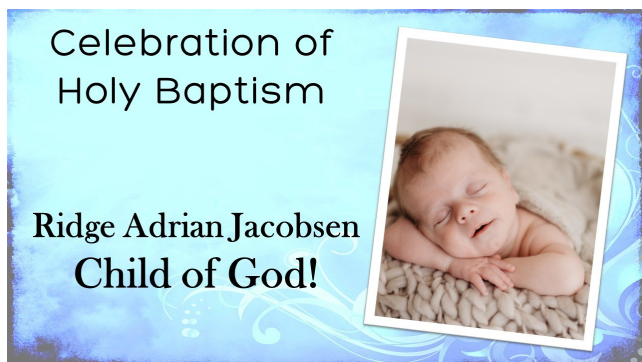
This is something new we are doing! Many of our preschool children are not partners of SoJ. This milestone shares the Spark Story Bible with families and we will have time to introduce milestones to them and the importance of sharing God's Word at home.

Teens & Traffic 8th Grade Milestone | Wed. February 21, 7-8 pm

All 8th graders and their parents are invited to attend. Special Guest & SoJ Partner, Sgt. Paul Creviston, will share his knowledge as 8th graders begin to think about driving and some new independence and parents figure out how to manage all this!

Kindergarten Prayer Pillow Milestone | Sat. February 24, 10-11 am

Kindergarten children and their parents are invited to this sweet milestone where each child will receive a Prayer Pillow and we will learn that we can pray anywhere because God is always with us.



Ridge Adrian Jacobsen, son of Brady

Jacobsen & Teresa Plck, was baptized on January 21 at the 11 am worship. Welcome Ridge! You are a child of God!

5th Grade Confession & Forgiveness



Outreach Opportunities



Health & Healing Event

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3 | 1-3 PM

Volunteers are needed in several different ways.

Find more information and sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups



Help Needed to Support our Ministry Partners

Each New Year we often ask ourselves, "Where is God calling me to care for my neighbor?"

Charis Ministry: Spirit of Joy is looking for a person (or 2) to serve on the Charis Ministry Partners board. Charis Ministry is the parent organization of Food to You and Necessities for Neighbors. It meets on the 3rd Monday of every month from 6-7pm at Eastside Lutheran Church. As a board member, you would be expected to attend the meetings and to communicate with the Outreach Team and SoJ leadership promoting our partners participation in these programs. Please prayerfully consider stepping into this position and representing Spirit of Joy.

Horace Mann Elementary School serves students who face significant challenges on the road to academic success. The SOJ Outreach Team is in need of a person to serve as a liaison. We work with Westminster Presbyterian Church members and Horace Mann staff to provide items/opportunities and support for students and staff. For more information, please contact Carole Chell carolechell@yahoo.com or Lynn Risty ronlynn@sio.midco.net.

Staff Feature

Each month we will introduce you to a different facet of our mission and ministry. We hope that you'll get to know the people involved, their role at Spirit of Joy, and how you can join them in making our ministry stronger!

Lifelong Faith Formation

Spirit of Joy promotes lifelong faith formation through Children of Joy, High School Faith Formation, Bible studies, faith milestones, Christian education, and intergenerational faith formation opportunities for individuals, the congregation and the community.

Deacon Hannah Fleming, Director of Congregational Life



Deacon Hannah works closely with the Outreach and Growth Teams to create and implement opportunities for bold service for high school through retirement. She leads the Sunday Forum, High School Youth, and Adult Ministry Teams. Her responsibilities include but are not limited to promoting and expanding faith formation, recruit, train, develop, and support leaders for milestones ministry to and with youth, and adults, and provide “hands on” support for milestone ministry events. She assists with worship twice a month and preaches occasionally.

Marnie Dahle Backer, Director of Next Generation Ministries

Marnie works with Milestone Ministry from baptism through 8th grade, children have a different milestone celebration each year. Each milestone is an event with learning time, conversation, connecting it to our faith and often a craft of some sort - something to take home with them to remind them of God's Word speaking to them. Marnie also assists Pastor Eric with middle school confirmation by handling the administration side of things: working with our guides, getting to know the youth, prepping materials, service events and fellowship times.



Michele Vogel, Director of Children's Faith Formation



Michele works with the Growth Team as we plan and implement Faith Formation opportunities for all generations. Her primary job responsibility is coordinating Children of Joy, a lectionary based curriculum for preschool through 5th grade. She recruits and supports volunteer teachers, reviews curriculum, and directs the children's Christmas program. She enjoys leading preschool chapel, organizing Family Fun Nights, and taking an annual trip to camp with elementary age kids!

Fall 2024 Preschool Registration Is Open!

Classroom spots for children 3, 4, and 5 years old are available. Learning areas include literacy, math, science, art, music, faith formation, and social studies. Visit the preschool website spiritofjoy.net to get a sneak peek of the preschool year, parent testimonials and registration information, too. Scholarships and SOJ Partner Discounts are offered. *Share your preschool with friends, a referral program is available.



A Special THANK YOU for your caring hearts, hands and donations

Craig Samuelson, Amy Orr, Roxanne Patzlaff, Mary Tranberg, Mandy Freeseemann, Jan Noer, Bette Kappedal, Donna Ver Wey, Liz Lynch, Gary & Suzanne DeBoom

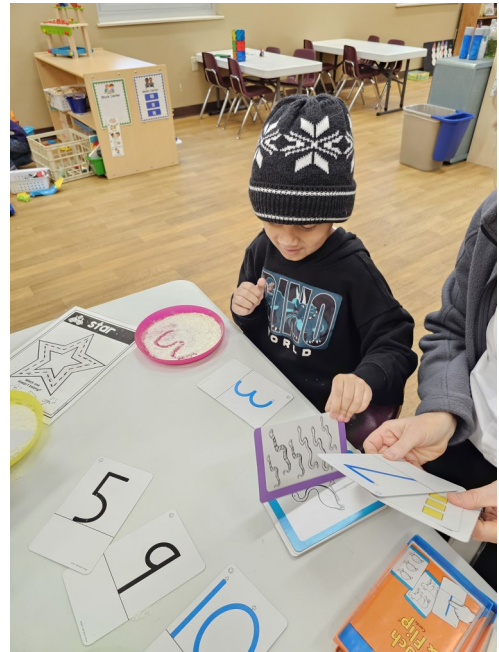
A Multisensory, Intergenerational Christmas Program



Last month our preschool children were able to share the story of Jesus' birth through song, and instruments. Reading Buddies partners narrated scripture readings with us. A nativity mural and handmade table decorations were also created. What a wonderful performance followed by delicious treats. It was a joy to host our family and friends. Thank you for coming!



Spirit of Joy Preschool



January Fun at Preschool





Join us for Fellowship & Learning

Wednesdays 7-8pm | Youth Room

***** Bring a Friend *****

February Schedule

February 7 - Commands

February 14 - Fellowship/Service Project

February 21 -Speaker: Jason Ahrendt shares his faith story. What does it look like to work and serve God? How does his faith story fit in his work and everyday life? It will be an inspirational night and we hope students and parents can join us.

February 28 - Random Acts of Kindness/Love Outing

The 11th Grade Money Matters Milestone RESCHEDULED

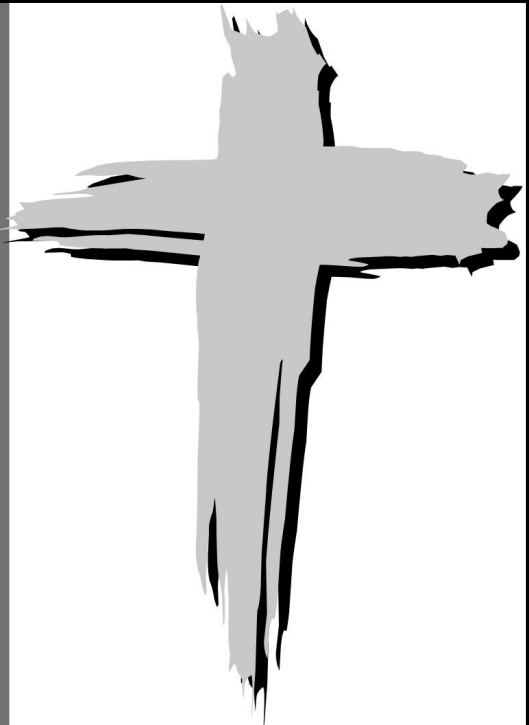
March 6 | 7PM - more information coming soon!



ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14

5:00 & 7:00 PM



YAGM News

Madeline Trosvig *SoJ Partner and Young Adult in Global Mission*

Christmas Time

I was worried going into the Christmas season, we were warned that this time can be difficult for YAGM volunteers and it was. With no host family, I worried I would spend Christmas alone. Thankfully this fear did not come true. Members of the church invited me to lunch on Christmas Eve. We ate apple soup, carrots, potatoes, and fish! It was great to share traditions with one another and spend time with the couples one-year-old! After lunch, we set up the Christmas tree and decorated it. In Hungary, it's tradition to set up the tree and decorate it on Christmas Eve. People are shocked when I tell them many people in America set up their trees shortly after Thanksgiving. I also learned that it is Jesus or Angels who bring the gifts on Christmas Eve, not Santa Clause. Rather, Santa comes on December 6th and leaves candy in the boots of the kids. After decorating, we sang hymns in Hungarian and English, which was a comfort to me, as my family sings carols every Christmas Eve. Similar to my church at home, the church service was packed and hard to find a spot!



Christmas Day was spent at church in the morning- which was a first for me as my family spends Christmas morning at home making lefse and playing in the snow with our cousins. After the service, I joined the Pastor and his family for lunch!



Creation Care Corner



According to the ELCA website, ashes are symbolic of attributes of our human existence: **(1)** “Ashes remind us of God’s condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, “Dust you are and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19). **(2)** “Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal.” **(3)** “Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life” **(4)** “Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins, and return to God.”

As we reflect upon Ash Wednesday, may we also turn our attention to our brothers and sisters impacted by environmental justice issues. According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), vulnerable communities are increasingly exposed to and/or burdened disproportionately by pollution and contamination. Ever heard of Cancer Alley in Louisiana? At one point, this 85-mile-long industrial stretch along the Mississippi River was once the site of sugar cane plantations and cornfields. Today more than 140 petrochemical plants are located here as well as 45,000 residents. This area has a higher-than-average number of cancer cases. Further, a higher percentage of residents here are Black, poor, and illiterate. This is an example of a “pollution hotspot” where communities are impacted by many sources of pollutants (not only petrochemical plants but incinerators and landfills, among others).

Recently, in Plaquemines parish (adjacent to Cancer Alley), residents were dealing with drought that led to low water pressure, not being able to wash hands or flush toilets, and saltwater coming out of faucets, etc. Residents were told to conserve water. At the same time, a new LNG (liquefied natural gas) terminal next door began its project and did not conserve water; they used anywhere from 13-24% of the water (exceeding 3.5 million gallons) while the people suffered, yet another example of environmental injustice.

Decades of research have shown that Black, Indigenous and brown communities have been on the forefront of environmental ills. This is multifactorial and multigenerational. Recently, there has been greater awareness as well as movements shining light on years of injustice. Other examples include inadequate access to healthy food, inadequate transportation and unsafe homes in areas of vulnerable populations.

Micah 6:8 NRSV

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

If we feel moved by the Spirit to help our brothers and sisters in Christ who are enduring hardship secondary to environmental injustice -- in addition to prayer -- how can we help?

Earthjustice

Moms Clean Air Force (for Dads too!)

Indigenous Environmental Network

350.org (SoDak 350 is a local group in the Sioux Falls area)

Sunrise Movement (geared towards youth)

Third Act (geared towards those over 60 years of age)

Write letters to companies and policy makers or call and leave a message

Educate yourself

Use the power of the boycott

NO MATTER WHAT God Answers Prayers



Family Fun Night

Friday, February 9 | 5:30-8:00 PM

- * Camp-Style Worship *
- * Bible Story *
- * Bounce House *
- * Pizza * Craft *

Service Project: Diaper Drive (any size)

sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Annual Winter Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 4 at 10AM

We will review our ministry of the past year and look ahead to opportunities in this new year. All confirmed partners (members) are encouraged to attend.

Brewed Theology

Sunday, February 25 at 7PM

Meet at Obscure Brewing Company (5200 Grant St. Sioux Falls, 57110).

For You Were Strangers - Immigrants, Refugees, & Exodus Sign up today for access to prep materials.

Flooding @ SoJ

Thank you to all of you who have responded so helpfully to our flood situation. It continues to amaze me to watch how we come together as a community. The following is for informational purposes. A brief summary of events and an intermediate range plan.

Monday, Jan. 22

6:15am Midwest Alarm notified Derris Kunkel (SoJ Facilities Manager) and Pr. Eric that there was an active alarm. Both arrived on site approximately 6:35am.

6:40am Fire Department shut off water to the building. Derris began removing water through the preschool entrance doors. Pr. Eric contacted Building Sprinkler, Intek, and SoJ staff and volunteers to begin cleanup.

7:15am Building Sprinkler arrived and began repairs. The first staff and volunteers began removing items from classrooms and offices. Derris moved to extraction, joined by Dave Tonsager.



8:40am Intek arrived and began deeper extraction. Initial estimates were return to business in 5-7 days.

10:00am Program Staff met offsite to discuss a short term plan. The decision was made to keep the preschool operational, which meant canceling, rescheduling, or relocating all other activities in the facility during the week. Shared hope was that we would be able to return items to offices and classrooms by Saturday, Jan. 27th.

1:00pm Water was restored to the building and the fire suppression system pressurized. Derris began removing cove base in three offices.

3:00pm Initial contact with insurance company and introduction to claim adjuster.

Tuesday, Jan. 23

10:00am Staff met onsite for regular business. Derris updated the team and the plan to be closed for the week affirmed.

1:00pm Preschool Director, Amy Cauble, and Preschool Teachers, Kendra Namanny and Jamie Appel, guided the staff in creating a makeshift preschool in The WELL, Shalom Center, Gathering Space, and the Sanctuary.

3:00pm Intek met with Derris to update fan and dehumidifier locations. Pr. Eric scheduled the claim adjuster for Wednesday morning.

Wednesday, Jan. 24

9:30am Claims Adjuster arrived and walked through with Derris. Several additional baseboards were identified for removal and small sections of sheetrock cut back to improve airflow.

1:00pm Intek arrived for further adjustments to fan and dehumidifier location. The initial assessment of 5-7 days was affirmed. Several areas of greater concern were identified that may cause longer term impacts.



Overall Impact



Roughly 1800-2000 square feet of the education and office wing were impacted including all offices on the southwest hallway, the preschool classrooms on both sides of the west hallway, and the Galilee Room. Activities were canceled and staff worked in a variety of fashions and locations. Material loss was minimal. Your staff did a good job storing things in containers and off the floor. No known personal items were lost.

We are currently awaiting decisions about further demolition including sheetrock and carpet. If further work is done, impacts will likely extend weeks to months. We have made the decision that we are able to proceed with Sunday and Wednesday Faith Formation, no matter the additional work. Other activities may continue to be rescheduled, relocated, or canceled.

Gratitude

- To Derris Kunkel for his knowledge and skillset. He saved SoJ massive amounts of time and money throughout this process.
- To the volunteers who responded on Monday morning. They were late for work, dropped other activities, and provided much needed physical labor as well as expertise in facility care and navigating insurance claims. Brian Oyen. Dave Tonsager. Jason Ahrendt. Bob Jenson. Jamie Lennon. Chad Wolff. Tim Karels.
- To many others who came through in different ways. Emily Geraets. Donna Ver Wey. Melody Torstenson. Linda Beckman. Alma Tonsager.
- To the staff who went above and beyond during removal and figured out a way to carry on when faced with uncertain circumstances.
- To you, the people of Spirit of Joy for your care, support, service, and generosity at all times.



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Wheelchairs for Mexico


HOPE HAVEN
INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

