

WIND SWEEP

Monthly Newsletter

January 2024

Dear 2024,

I'm excited to meet you. 2023 was a good year. A year of change. Of challenges. Of new experiences. Of growth.

I'm curious what you will bring. I'm sure that we'll see more change. I believe that's life's one constant. But, what else will you bring for me and for Spirit of Joy? Will we see the return of more old fan favorites? Will there be a new idea that transforms our lives together? What challenges will we face that we didn't expect? How will I, and we, grow? I wish that I could know now what you have in store for me and for us. But, I trust that no matter what comes, we will face it together and you will be with us, your Holy Spirit guiding us as your shekinah led the people through the wilderness from Egypt to Israel, reshaping and making them yours through the journey.

Through it all, no matter what you bring, I've decided that my focus will be this one word, this one idea:

Together

My ministry coach encouraged us to begin praying about and looking for a word that would help center us through all of 2024 and that's my word. It was inspired by studying Paul's letter to the Philippians.

"Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends."

-Philippians 2:2 The Message

I started reading it at a retreat and it made me think of Spirit of Joy. Unlike most of his letters, Paul wasn't writing to address a crisis or conflict, but to express his appreciation and affection for all their support and the ways that they live out the gospel. I feel that for this place and these people.

As I reflect on why "together", I find I'm particularly intrigued by its playful synonyms. In cahoots. Cheek to cheek. Side by side. Hand in glove. In collusion. Cheek by jowl. In league.

2024, do you think we can be in cahoots for the gospel? Can we **play together** for **Radical Hospitality**? Getting to know one another and creating space for each of us to be more fully who God called us to be?

Can we serve hand in glove with our Ministry Partners? And, continuing to **serve** our neighbors in Christ **together** be leaders in **Bold Service**?

What might it look like for us to be in league with each other providing opportunities for **Lifelong Faith Formation** so that we can **grow together**?

Oh mysterious and as yet unknown one, will you allow us to **be together** cheek to cheek for **Passionate Worship**?

2024, will you give us the courage to stand side by side as we **strive together** to provide the **Ministry Resources** necessary for our community to live as God's kingdom come?

I do not know what 2024 will bring, dear Spirit of Joy,
but I'm glad that we are going into it **TOGETHER**.



Eric E. O'Neil

Join us for Worship

SUNDAYS - 8:45 & 11:00 AM Worship, 10:00 AM Faith Formation Hour

WEDNESDAYS - 6:30 PM Worship, 7:00 PM Faith Formation Hour



JANUARY 2024

Sunday Forum: 10am, Sunday mornings during faith formation hour in the Galilee Room. Bring your coffee and a treat! Our focus for Epiphany is Prayer. Check out the SOJ website for our Sunday Forum discussion topics. Come just as you are. No prior knowledge is required.

January 7 – The Anniversary of Baptism Milestone

Pastor Jeff Backer will bring the good news and extend an invitation to deeper relationship with him and the men of St. Dymas Prison Congregation. All those baptized in 2023 and their families are invited to attend a special milestone gathering at 10AM followed by a special milestone blessing during the second service. **Sunday Forum:** St. Dymas with Pastor Jeff Backer

January 14 – Preschool Sunday & 11th Grade Money Matters Milestone

Come meet our preschool team. Join them between services for treats to thank the congregation for all the blessings they've shared. Following the second service, 11th graders and their parents invited to lunch at 12:30 for the Money Matters Milestone in Shalom Center.

Sunday Forum: The View from Above

January 21 – “My Church” Children’s Message and 5th Grade Milestone Confession & Forgiveness

8:45 service – Mary Tranberg will share an example of a 2-year-old My Church book.

11:00 service - We'll lift up our 5th graders as they learn why we gather in confession and forgiveness each week. **Sunday Forum:** Why Pray?

January 28 – Volunteer Appreciation Sunday

It takes more than 250 hours per week of your time and energy to make Spirit of Joy go. We want to recognize and celebrate you! Join us at either worship service and a special coffee hour.

Sunday Forum: Keeping Company with God



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

Congregational Life

Social Justice: Domestic Violence | Tuesday, 1/9 | 9:30 AM

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in every 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience severe intimate partner violence. Domestic violence is happening every day. Join us for a discussion with Amy Carter, Program Director of Children's Home Shelter for Family Safety. How can the church make a difference? **Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups**

SoJ Night with Terry Liggins | Wednesday, 1/10 | 7 PM

Join us for Terry Liggins' inspirational story of how he is a living testament to the redeeming power of God's grace. He is an inspirational speaker, national champion hurdler, founder of Hurdle Life Coach Foundation and CEO at TLC Services. All Are Welcome!

Social Gathering for All: Sing Along with Char Sorum | Monday, 1/15 | 5 PM

We have so much to be thankful to God for in the New Year. And what better way express thanks as a congregation than a sing along with our own Char Sorum! Come, make a joyful noise to God. ALL are welcome to this heartwarming experience. Treats will be provided.

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Monthly Women's Rotational In-Home Fellowship

No 5 PM in-home on Monday, January 8, we will resume our fellowship on February 11. Contact Deb Stapelman with questions. Welcome to coffee at 9am, Tuesday, December 9 at the church; join the Domestic Violence presentation in Shalom. Contact Suzanne DeBoom.

Women's Weekly Bible Study | Thursdays at 9 AM ** Begins Thursday, January 18

Our Bible study topic is *Joseph: The Journey to Forgiveness* by Melissa Spoelstra. Please note the change in our Bible study day (no evening Bible Study). Limited copies available in the office (\$10).

Grief Support Group

The death of a loved one is very painful. Grief is a natural response to this painful experience. Grief is not a disease, and there is no quick fix for what you are feeling. We all grieve differently. As your church, we want to come along side you to offer you support, help strengthen, and encourage you on your grief journey. We are starting a grief support group February. Please look for more information coming soon.



Faith Formation



Baptism Cards

In the last six months you might have received a card from Spirit of Joy to celebrate the anniversary of your baptism! Your baptism date is so important to us - it's like your second birthday! We think it's important to be reminded of the day that Jesus claimed you as his own and declared that he will never let you go! The card offers you a few ideas on how to celebrate - maybe having blue frosted cupcakes for dessert, lighting a candle or even calling your godparents to see what they remember about that day!

Some of our records are missing



baptism dates - if you have yet to receive a card, please text or email Marnie (605-360-7354, marnie.spiritofjoy@gmail.com). If you aren't sure of your exact date but know where you're baptized, you could send an email to your childhood congregation requesting the information. Or... ask your parents, they probably have a good idea and maybe even a baptism certificate laying around!

You are a Child of God

Milestones Coming Soon



Anniversary of Baptism is happening on Sunday, January 7. We will gather at 10:15 a.m. in Galilee with families that have had a child baptized in 2023. We will share a little time, treats and learning together as we continue to share in the baptismal promises. A special blessing will be at the 11 a.m. worship service.

5th Grade Confession & Forgiveness - a new milestone on Sunday, January 21. 5th graders and their parents are invited at 10AM. We'll lift up our 5th graders as they learn why we gather in confession and forgiveness each week. Light breakfast provided.



11th Grade Money Matters Milestone: All 11th graders and their parents are invited to lunch and a presentation at 12:30pm on Sunday, January 14 after worship. Our goal is to empower students to make informed financial decisions, understand budgeting and saving, understand the implementation of credit and debit, and plan for their future. Josh Swanstrom, one of our partners, and the head of financial operations at Bancorp will facilitate our caring conversation. RSVP online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Outreach Opportunities

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

The Banquet West

710 N MARION, SIOUX FALLS
(5TH & MARION)

sign up at 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) with a passion for serving our local community to serve on the Charis Ministry Partners board. Charis Ministry is the parent organization of Food to You and Necessities for Neighbors. We are one of 13 congregations that work together to arrange for monthly distributions of food and necessities including laundry soap and diapers.

The board is made up of 1 – 2 persons from each congregation. It meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 6 to 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. Although not required, board participation in Food to You, Necessities for Neighbors and other board events is appreciated. Please prayerfully consider stepping into this position and representing Spirit of Joy.

Horace Mann Elementary: One way Spirit of Joy seeks to answer God's call is in our commitment to support Horace Mann Elementary school which 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 for our Partnership with Horace Mann Elementary School. 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!

Worship and Music

Currently, we have three worship services each week (8:45 & 11:00 on Sunday, 6:30 on Wednesday). We also have special seasonal worship experiences including Christmas, Holy Week, and more.

Pastor Eric Ohrtman



Pastor Eric works closely with the Worship Team and Worship Staff to plan and implement Passionate Worship at Spirit of Joy. He thinks thematically about the scripture assigned in the Revised Common Lectionary and occasionally creates or brings resource that highlight a specific theme. He is the leader of the Visual Arts Team, the primary worship leader, and preaches roughly three times each month.

Heather Wald, Director of Worship Arts

Heather works closely with Pr. Eric, the worship staff, and worship team in planning and implementing worship. Heather serves as the SoJ Choir Director and accompanies worship two Sundays per month, every Wednesday, and occasional festival worship. She also coordinates SoJ's other musicians, the gifts of special music, and works with the Visual Arts Team. She has a gift for connecting music with scriptural and theological themes.



Carli Kuehn, Worship Leader



Carli works closely with Pr. Eric, the worship staff, and worship team in planning and implementing worship. Carli works with the worship band, One Sunday, to lead congregational worship two Sundays a month. She also helps lead Summer Worship and is a gifted leader for life passages, including weddings and funerals.

Bella Kumagai, Choir Accompanist

Bella meets with the SoJ choir each week to accompany rehearsals and plays for them during worship and special occasions. She is our primary substitute worship leader and has provided special music for festal worship.





Spirit of Joy Preschool

Fall 2023 Preschool Registration Open in January

You are invited to enroll in Fall 2024 Spirit of Joy Preschool classes!

Registration begins on January 1 for children ages three years to five years old by September 1, 2024. Join us next year as we learn and grow in faith and develop foundational academic skills. Forms can be submitted online, in person, or dropped off at the front office.

January 1-7: Early Bird Registration for Partners and Current Families

January 8: Registration for the Community – All are welcome, invite your colleagues and neighbors.

*Tours are currently being scheduled- we would be happy to show you our beautiful preschool.

Areas of learning include math, literacy, faith, music, science, writing, and social/emotional skills. Preschool curriculum follows SD Early Learning guidelines. Small class sizes support individual learners and support growth in the ways he/she learns best.

Visit our website for more information and view our “Preschool Day” registration video!



SPIRIT OF JOY
PRESCHOOL

Christmas Time at Preschool

At preschool, it is our goal to learn through active play. Christmas time offers many fun ways to explore our world with our peers while learning math, geometry, literacy, Bible stories and more. Check out the next page for a snapshot of our month!



Spirit of Joy Preschool



Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) Skills- how many bears can fit on your bridge? How can you add more to the bridge?



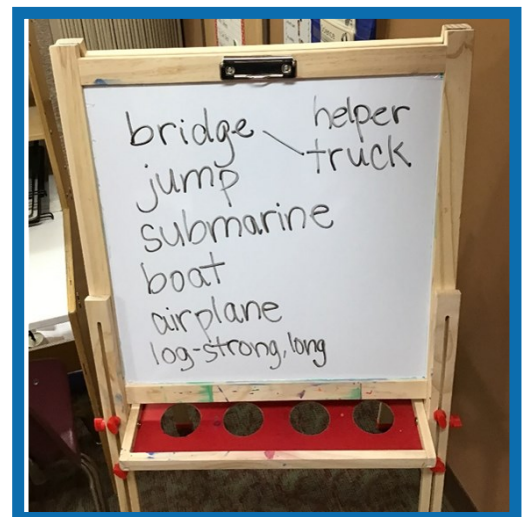
Literacy - describing how various textures feel while decorating a tree



Bible Story exploration through dramatic play



Fine Motor, Math, and Literacy skills all in one gingerbread house!



Problem solving skills - how can the gingerbread man get across the river

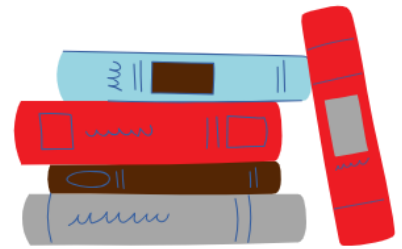
Check Us Out...

Weekly/Monthly Happenings

Books that Matter: Thursday, January 11 at 7 PM

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

This month we're reading "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker.



Faith and Fitness: Mondays at 6 PM | Begins, January 8

Join certified health and nutrition coach, Amy Orr Monday for Faith, Family, & Fitness Nights at Spirit of Joy. She'll share a short devo, lead us in a fun, challenging, but doable 30 minute workout, and share manageable tips for helping your family lead healthier lives...think easy recipes and activities for families on the go! All fitness levels welcome!



Tai Chi: 1st & 3rd Saturdays at 10:30 AM in The Well

Tai chi is a gentle form of exercise, accessible to nearly everyone, that uses slow movements coordinated with breath to encourage relaxation, improve balance, and move the body without pain. Adaptations can be made for those who find standing uncomfortable.



Caregivers Support Group: 3rd Tuesday of each month 10 AM in Library

Led by Rev. Dennis Tranberg, this group provides a space for comradery while addressing a different topic each month. All who give care for any reason are welcome. Drop in!



Spirit of Joy Choir: Wednesdays at 5:30 PM | Begins January 17

We rehearse until 6:25 and then you are invited to worship at 6:30. Children of Joy, Confirmation and Youth Group will follow at 7:00. **Can't make it at 5:30?** Come and join us when you can! Choir is open to high school students and older!



YAGM News



My host family and a sketch from my rooftop.

CARL NORQUIST *SoJ Partner and Young Adult in Global Mission*

It is difficult to talk about my host family and community because there are many things I do not know. I also want to be respectful of their privacy. There are three, a mother, daughter, and son. Mouhamed is my age and operates a business selling diet supplements. Unlike his mother and sister, he can speak English. I am very thankful there is one person in my home who can talk to me and answer my questions. Khadija works hard. She seems to spend a big chunk of her time cleaning and helping with dinner. When she is not doing that, she is camped out at the kitchen table or in front of the television working on her studies. I want to tell her that her hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed, but I lack the language skills to adequately express those sentiments. Perhaps the thing I most want to say to my family is “thank you.” In Wolof, the word for thank you is “jërejëf,” but it feels so inadequate for the work my family does. I want to say I genuinely appreciate them, and I recognize their patience and hospitality. Unfortunately, right now, a simple jërejëf is the best I can muster.

When I am not spending time with my family, I’m working at the library at Centre Communautaire Galle Nanondiral. CCGN is operated by Services Luthériens pour le Développement au Sénégal and provides education and extracurricular activities for youth in the Yeumbeul area. I talked a little about SLDS and their work in my previous newsletter. They are acting out the gospel not through proselytizing, but through service. It is good work and I’m excited to continue the relationship. As my language improves, I will travel with SLDS to document some of the work they are doing in the country. In the meantime, I am using my organizational skills to rearrange the library.

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

Settling In

On September 15, I arrived in Szeged and dedicated the first two days to the exciting tasks of unpacking and getting acquainted with my new neighborhood. For the first time in my life, I am living completely alone in an apartment. I live in a beautiful neighborhood with the *Új Zsinagóga* (New Synagogue) in my backyard, which is one of the most stunning buildings I have ever seen. The city center is only a five minute walk and the *piac* (market) is only a 10 minute walk from my apartment!



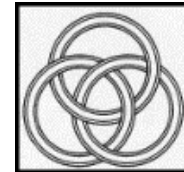


Creation Care Corner



*“My heart shall sing of the day you bring, let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears for the dawn draws near and the world is about to turn!”*

-- Canticle of the Turning by Rory Cooney



Circles and lines are something we learned about in elementary school. In Christianity, a circle is an endless line, having no beginning or ending, symbolizing God eternal. *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”* – Revelation 22:13. Three interwoven circles, also known as Borromean Rings, represent the Trinity.

Currently, there is a rise in discussions regarding a circular economy versus a linear economy. What we have right now is primarily a linear economy. Things are made without much regard to the impact on the land, air, or waterways; these products are then sold, they are used, and then they are thrown away or incinerated. This is referred to as a “take-make-consume-throw away” pattern.

A circular economy aims to “close the loop” on the above pattern. Here, waste is minimized because all that is produced is transferred and used somewhere else continuously. This type of system significantly cuts down the release of greenhouse gases with an emphasis on products designed for durability, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling.

In the 2002 book, [Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things](#) by William McDonough and Michael Braungart, they use the metaphor of a cherry tree:

“The tree makes copious blossoms and fruit without depleting its environment. Once they fall on the ground, their materials decompose and break down into nutrients that nourish microorganisms, insects, plants, animals, and

soil. Although the tree actually makes more of its ‘product’ than it needs for its own success in an ecosystem, this abundance has evolved (through millions of years of success and failure or, in business terms, R&D), to serve rich and varied purposes.” They further postulate, “What might the human-built world look like if a cherry tree had produced it?”

Want more to think about?

- About a third of food produced for human consumption goes to rot or waste
- Over the past 15 years, clothing production has doubled, but we wear our clothes for half as long. Where do you think much of this old clothing ends up? This is a beach in Ghana where much of our “fast fashion” ends up.
- In the US, 160 million tons of building-related construction and demolition waste is generated each year yet less than 1/3 of that is reused or recycled despite the fact that it contains worthwhile amounts of steel, wood and concrete
- We’re all aware of ongoing problems with plastics. Of the 300 million metric tons of plastics produced globally each year, only 12% is reused or recycled. Ideally, we would have a future where plastic would not become waste.

What can we do? It is a new year and time to put plans into action:

- Buy durable & reusable products that are meant to last & can be used multiple times
- Reduce your consumption
- Reuse & repair items
- Recycle and/or compost your waste
- Advocate for circular policies
- Buy from circular businesses
- Educate yourself



Odds & Ends

New Partner Class

Sunday, January 28 @ 12PM

Anyone interested in becoming a partner with Spirit of Joy is invited! Lunch. A tour of our campus. Getting to know each other. And, who we are and what we are committed to as Spirit of Joy.

Partners, now is a wonderful time to invite your neighbors and friends! Congregation Meeting with reports and deep dives on mission and ministry, Lent and Holy Week, and an opportunity to help shape our future together in the mission and vision process.

Radical Hospitality & Bold Service

Spirit of Joy is always collecting wonderful items for our friends in the community. From our regular collections of: Food on the Fourth for Food to You, food items and candy for Church on the Street to supporting Horace Mann Elementary, toilet paper for Necessities for Neighbors and so much more. We are excited to unveil a new collection zone in the Shalom Center. Special thanks to partner, Craig Samuelson, who created these beautiful collection bins! Keep a look out for all the ways you can be involved in supporting our neighbors.



SOJ @ THE STAMPEDE

JANUARY 13, 6:05 PM

Buy your tickets online: spiritofjoy.net/signups
\$15/ticket - (\$5/ticket goes toward 2024 Youth Gathering)

2023 MINISTRY CELEBRATION



Our Synod's vision of Journeying Together in Christ has continued to focus our work. We invite you to take a few moments to review the list below which celebrates some of the ministry we shared together in 2023. **Journeying together in Christ as the South Dakota Synod, in 2023 we:**

- Applied for and received a grant of **\$1,137,384** from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Thriving Congregations Initiative for new initiatives that are not included the Synod's Mission Plan. Please reach out to Synod Staff for **more information!**
- Completed explorations for two new potential church plants, with plans to start a worshipping community in **Box Elder** and **Shepherd's Table in Sioux Falls**.
- Walked with the **40** people in various stages of **Candidacy** and have **4** new entrance interviews scheduled in 2024!
- Received **3 new first call candidates**.
- Completed **23 Ministry Site Studies** and extended **28 calls!**
- Ensured that nearly every congregation has a called pastor, interim pastor, Synod Authorized Minister, or lay leader to care for God's people (thank you to all of you who are helping out with area congregations and filling in!).
- Distributed **\$77,137** to date through the Seminary Debt Reduction Program.
- Granted **\$123,000** in scholarship funds to seminary students, **\$11,400** in internship site assistance, and **\$82,990** to Luther and Wartburg Seminaries, for a total of **\$217,390** in support of seminary education.
- Created a **pilot rural J-term** program with Wartburg Theological Seminary, which will begin in January 2024.
- Received **\$113,635** in grants from ELCA Christian Community & Leadership.
- Held a **Synod Assembly**, where we gathered again as a community to conduct the business of the synod.
- Hosted **Spring** and **Fall Theological Conferences**, where we continued to support the continuing education of our Rostered Ministers either online or in-person.
- Supported the congregations and ministries of the synod through **visits** by synod staff, both **digital** and in-person.
- Hosted a "**Lay Leader Night**" to support congregational lay leaders and supported rostered leaders with regular **in-person and virtual meetings**, such as monthly rostered minister virtual check-ins, Synodically Authorized Minister, Senior Pastor, and Interim Pastor check-ins, and a First Call and Senior Pastor Retreat.
- Pr. Alan Blankenfeld, Synod **Rural Ministry Liaison** continued to journey with our rural ministry sites. In the past year, Pr. Alan has worked directly with **34 communities and congregations in transition**.
- Continued the work of the Rural Ministry Table, which is currently working on **Small Town and Rural (STAR) grants**, grants funded by the generous donations to rural ministry in the Synod.
- Partnered with **Bergen Lutheran** to hold a **Threshing Bee** which resulted in gifts of **\$51,324** to support rural ministry in South Dakota.

Thank you for all the ways you have supported the ministry of the South Dakota Synod this past year! God has called us to be the body of Christ together, and this is an active and healthy body. We look forward to continuing our journey with you in 2024 and beyond!



**SPIRIT OF JOY AND SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCHES
INVITE YOU TO TRAVEL WITH US TO**

THE HOLY LAND

FEBRUARY 4-13, 2025



Trip Highlights Include: Being on the Sea of Galilee, Walking Jerusalem's Way of the Cross, Floating in the Dead Sea, Exploring Bethlehem, and So Much More!



Come Find Out More About this Life Changing Trip!

INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS:

Option 1:

**SUN
NOV 12
2023
AT 12PM**

Option 2:

**TUES
JAN 23
2024
AT 7PM**

**BOTH MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT SPIRIT OF JOY
(2208 W LA QUINTA ST, SIOUX FALLS, ND)**

SCAN ME



**FOR MORE
TRIP INFORMATION**
www.sunlighttours.org

**WE'RE GETTING
EXCITED!
MARK YOUR
CALENDARS NOW.**

Anniversary of Baptism

and

St. Dymas
hope beyond bars

JANUARY 07

Preschool

Sunday



JANUARY 14

Milestone

Celebrations



JANUARY 21

Volunteer Appreciation

Sunday

Thank you

JANUARY 28



UPCOMING EVENTS | 2024

sign up online: spiritofojoy.net/signups

WED. 1/10

SOJ Night

with

Terry Liggins

SAT. 1/13



SOJ @ The Stampede

6:05 PM

FRI. 2/09

Family Fun

Night

5:30 PM



FEBRUARY 04

Annual
Congregation
Meeting



Washed & Fed
Refreshed

