



WINDSWEEP

March 2022

Lent 2022: Psalm 23



Eric Ohrtman
Associate Pastor

For my 19th birthday I bought myself a beginning flyfishing setup and, at the first chance I had, waded into the Middle Fork of the Salmon River where I flailed for three hours. Suddenly a sharp noise. Was that a bark? Again. Again. That’s a bark. Then sheep started to fill the banks around me. Something was going on. I packed my gear, picked my way to shore, and peaked over the embankment. There stood a wagon, an old fashioned, “go west to Oregon” wagon, and on its seat a shepherd, rifle across his lap looking over his vast herd. He saw me immediately and I probably imagined that he changed the grip on his rifle, but as I hailed across the noise of a flock disturbed, he waved me over.

We were a study in contrasts. Everything I had on or was holding had been purchased in the last four weeks and practically wreaked of conditioning chemicals. He looked... and smelled... quite the opposite. We spoke for no more than 10 minutes. And yet, in those minutes I learned that the rifle was his rod, there for protecting his flock and defeating enemies. The dogs were his staff, ever guiding and correcting along the well-worn path of the valley floor. Most of the time the wagon moves in the middle of the flock, at others, it moves to the front like God’s shekina in the wilderness after Egypt, and on a very rare occasion it pushes from the back. “That”, he said, “is how God works with us. Always present. Protecting and guiding. Usually in lockstep with us, but from time to time giving us courage by leading, or moving us along with a gentle nudge.” The quotes close, but the idea is spot on. What I remember clearly is stepping away from the wagon and watching the herd move around me, wagon in the middle, shepherd at the ready. And, I’ve never thought of the 23rd Psalm without him and his words, since.

As Spirit of Joy, our focus for worship and devotion this Lent will be on Psalm 23. It is our memory verse for Children of Joy. Daily and weekly devotions. The dismissal each week for Sunday worship. It will be broken down and centered for our Wednesday Lenten Worship. Join us as we learn...



- *God is a shepherd who provides.*
- *God leads us.*
- *God is with us.*
- *God pursues us with grace.*
- *We respond in faith.*

A Psalm of David

¹The LORD *is* my shepherd;
I shall not want.

²He makes me to lie down in
green pastures;
He leads me beside the still
waters.

³He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness
For His name’s sake.

⁴Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You *are* with me;
Your rod and Your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in
the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy
shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house
of the LORD
Forever.



“The 23rd Psalm is one of the best known pieces of scripture by Christians all over the world. It is a text that is quick to the lips in hospital rooms, at funerals, and in daily moments of need. The ancient words of this song have a way of sticking with us, nestling into our bones, and singing us home. During the season of Lent, we will return to this text day in and day out...and discover in ourselves a need for the love of a shepherd to tend our needs.” -Rev. Dr. Rolf Jacobson

spiritofjoy.net

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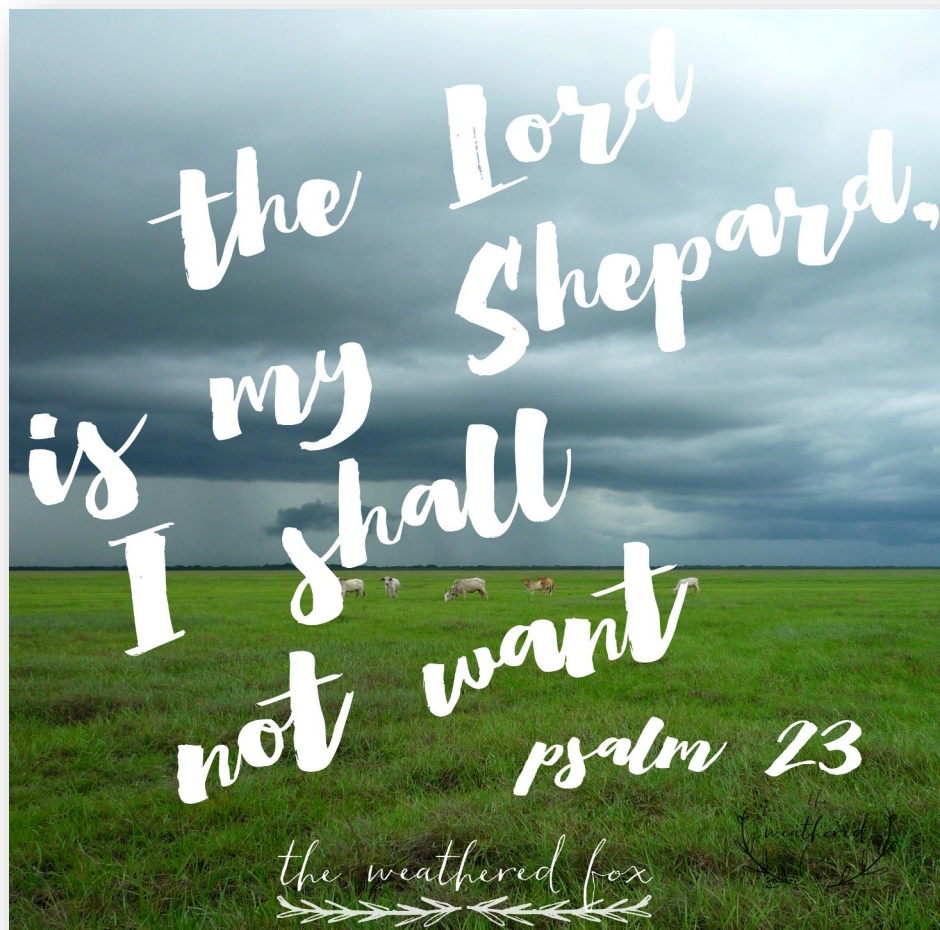
Ash Wednesday Worship

March 2 | 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.



Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

On the following Wednesdays in Lent, **beginning March 9**, Spirit of Joy will walk with our Good Shepherd Jesus to the Cross by immersing ourselves in the comforting words of **Psalm 23** during **Wednesday Evening Prayer from 6:15 to 7:00 p.m.** We will consider the rich gift of **Psalm 23** verse by verse over five Wednesday evenings through music, words, visual art, and hands on activities during worship.



Outreach Opportunities



FOOD TO YOU

MARCH 17

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH
235 NORTH PRAIRIE AVE

FOOD OF THE MONTH
HEARTY SOUP

Sign up: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Children of Joy

We will continue collecting quarters through Sunday, April 10th (Palm Sunday). Our collection goal is \$650. As of Thursday, February 24th our total collected is \$423.75. Our April servant event is Tuesday, April 26th. We encourage you to find a child in the congregation to gift your quarters to for placement in the blue jar in the worship space during our regular offering collection.



Upcoming Outreach Opportunities

February 4-April 10 Laundry with Love Quarter Drive

March 17 - Food to You

April 17-May 15 Journey of Hope Drive

April 26 - Laundry with Love

Look for online sign up's at spiritofjoy.net as the event approaches!

Faith Formation

Upcoming Milestones



Teens & Traffic Milestone

Wednesday, March 9

Worship Blessing at 6:15 PM | Class at 7:00 PM

RSVP: spiritofjoy.net/signups



2nd Grade Lord's Prayer Milestone

Wednesday, March 23 at 7:00 p.m.

OR

Sunday, March 27 at 10:00 a.m.



First Communion Milestone

Saturday, April 2 | 9:00-10:30 AM

RSVP: spiritofjoy.net/signups by Wed. 3/23

An Update About the National Youth Gathering

At the end of January, the ELCA made the decision to cancel the National Youth Gathering that was supposed to take place this summer in Minneapolis. You can find their full statement at [ELCA.org/youthgathering](https://elca.org/youthgathering). All money made from our fundraisers will be kept for the next Gathering. After the cancellation was announced, the ten high schoolers and the adult leaders met over zoom to discuss alternative plans. Although disappointed about the cancellation, the excitement came back as ideas were tossed around. The final decision was to go on a houseboat trip. We have reserved two houseboats with Lake Vermillion Houseboats and are so excited to explore this beautiful area as a crew.

In peace,
Madeline Trosvig



Staff Feature

Tell us a little about your background

I grew up across the border in Luverne, MN. I graduated from Augustana College with degrees in Business Administration and Communications and spent my early career working in the non-profit world - mostly in fundraising. When my husband, Joe, finished his pediatric residency we moved to Willmar, MN, where I managed a mentoring program for several years. It was during that time that I really learned the importance of positive adult influence in children's lives and have since spent a lot of my energy at my children's schools and church. We have three children - Emma (who is a senior at Concordia College), Patrick (a senior at Sioux Falls Christian) and Margaret (a freshman at SFC.) We moved back to Sioux Falls in 2011 and I have been working as the Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation since August of 2019. When not working, I love to spend time with my family, read (especially a good mystery), cook, and do crafty projects like quilt, stamp and scrapbook - especially together with my mom and sister.



Michele Vogel

Director of
Children's Faith Formation
sojyouth2208@gmail.com

What would constitute a "perfect" day for you?

I love spending time at the lake with my family. So a perfect day would be breakfast on the porch overlooking the lake (while playing a game of RACKO), then kayaking, and pizza on the grill for lunch. In the

afternoon, I'd read a good book (and nap a bit) and then go on a boat ride while the kids enjoy water sports. Ka-bobs on the grill are a favorite summertime dinner followed by fishing until dusk - though I don't touch the worms or the fish! I love star-gazing and eating s'mores by the campfire to end the day!

If you were to host a podcast what would the topic be?

Parenting. I most certainly do not have all of the answers - but parents need support, encouragement and reassurance. Our family has had many challenges - accidents, injuries, and food allergies to name a few. Parenting is hard work and I want people to know that they are not alone in this journey.

Guilty Pleasure Movie/ Television Show

One of my favorite things to watch is the Olympics! I especially enjoy ice skating during the winter games and gymnastics in the summer. I've attended a few local skating club shows and watched Oksana Baiul in person - the talent, power and strength these athletes have is just simply amazing.

What is one of your favorite hymns/Christian songs?

I have many favorite hymns, but Silent Night probably tops the list. I love it at Christmas with candlelight, and I also sang it to my babies in the middle of the night when I was longing for silence and sleep. Singing it brings me peace.

Adult Education

Spring 2022 Sunday Forum Schedule | 10:00 AM

March 6-April 10: Romans - The Book of Faith Series

Paul's letter to the Romans is very different than any of his other letters. Paul addresses many of the important questions that arise when one considers the relationship between God and creation, as well as topics such as salvation and grace. This 6-session Bible study explores selected passages from the book of Romans. For groups wanting to enhance the study by covering the entire book of Romans, homework and enrichment activities are included in this study.



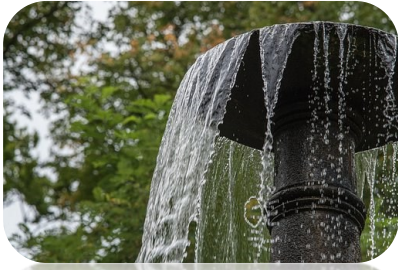
- What must I do to be saved? (Romans 3:9-31)
- Saved by grace . . . isn't that too good to be true? (Romans 5:1-11)
- If what I do doesn't save me, does it matter how I live? (Romans 6:1-23)
- Where is God when we suffer? (Romans 8:18-39)
- How can I keep from singing? (Romans 10:1-21)
- What does God want from us? (Romans 12:1-21)

April 24: Hope Haven International

Our goal is to deliver wheelchairs to people in desperate need of them around the world. Through this process, we're bringing together people in need with people who have a heart to help. Sometimes it's hard to tell who benefits more! Throughout the U.S., we receive donations of new and used wheelchairs, parts, raw materials, financial support, and more. Hundreds of volunteers worldwide make our international efforts possible by donating their time, talents, and resources to help our cause. At Spirit of Joy, our Woodworking Group is helping by making 8 internal parts for each pediatric chair. We meet twice per month during the school year. Join us to learn more!



Spirit of Joy's Spring Building Debt Reduction Campaign *Overflowing!*



*You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also **overflows** with many thanksgivings to God.*

2 Corinthians 9:11-12

This month Spirit of Joy kicks off our *Overflowing!* building debt reduction campaign to invite our partners and friends to continue to help us pay for our new building expansion. So many responded with *extravagant generosity* to our *Called in Faith, Growing in Joy* campaign that we were able to pay off *all* the remaining debt on our first building AND pay half of the cost of our \$4 million building expansion--in just three years! Thanks be to God!

That three-year campaign comes to an end on April 30th. We are grateful for the gifts that continue to come in leading to our surpassing \$2.2 million in total gifts this past month!

As that campaign concludes, we are getting ready to ask for your continued support to help us pay down the remaining debt on the beautiful new addition to our ministry headquarters. The kick off to our *Overflowing!* Campaign will be **Sunday, March 13th**. Watch your inbox and mailbox and come to worship to find out more about Twelve Days of Prayer, our financial needs and goals, and the ways new construction has already enhanced our ministry together.

* * * * *

Creation Care Corner



This month people around the world will come together to observe **World Water Day on March 22nd**. World Water Day is an annual United Nations Observance, started in 1993, that celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2 billion people currently living without access to safe water. A core focus of World Water Day is to inspire action towards the Sustainable Development Goal of water and sanitation for all by 2030.

This year's emphasis is on "making the invisible visible" by learning more about *groundwater*. Almost all of the liquid freshwater in the world is groundwater, supporting drinking water supplies, sanitation systems, farming, industry and ecosystems. In many places, human activities over-use and pollute groundwater, in part because it is *out of sight, out of mind*. Some simple creation care activities you might consider this month:

- * *Wait to run your dishwasher* until it is full. This reduces your water use and saves you money!
- * *Reduce your shower time* by a couple of minutes. According to one study, the average American shower uses 2.5 gallons/minute. Two minutes less in the shower saves five gallons!
- * Find out more about the work of *Friends of the Big Sioux River* whose mission is "to protect and restore the Big Sioux River and its watershed, improve the water quality, and educate our community to build a conservation ethic." Read more at www.friendsofthebigsiouxriver.org

Spirit of Joy Preschool

WE'RE SWINGING INTO SPRING WITH...
SPIRIT OF JOY PRESCHOOL'S
1st Annual Mini Golf "PAR-TEE" FUNDRAISER!
Sunday, March 6 at 1:30-3:30 PM

ALL AGES WELCOME—COME JOIN THE FUN
\$2 per golfer
** Popcorn, Golf, & Prizes **



*Proceeds from the fundraiser will assist with a
Community Build Clubhouse
& assist with preschool operating costs.*

Preschool Registration for Fall 2022

Registration has begun. There is a spot for your favorite preschooler. Call, click or come in for more information. We would love to meet your favorite preschooler here. *Registrations available online, mail or in person.



For more information or to schedule a tour (available anytime),
contact Amy Cauble, teacher & director at 605-333-2004
amycauble@spiritofjoypreschool.net.

Registration available online or in person
spiritofjoy.net/preschool for more information
Scholarships, partner and sibling discounts available

Spirit of Joy Preschool

Faith Story

Did you ever notice how some things stick in your head? Remember that commercial from when you were a child? (go ahead and sing it now) Why can you remember that but not your PIN number to the online grocery store?



Sometimes, it works out just right though. During Chapel time, the children have sung a few familiar camp-like songs recently. There are fun rhythms, loud voices, and silly actions. Super fun and active. We have also been practicing our letters. It was letter V week. We had a vegetable taste test and then free art time, painting with the vegetables. As I was gathering more supplies, I overheard some conversation about ways to paint with them- “try this way”, “what about doing this?” Before you know it, one child started singing and painting with vigor...“Oh, be bold, be strong!” I smiled. Much to my surprise, others quickly chimed in “For the Lord your God is with me. I am not afraid”. The class repeated this part of the song over and over while boldly creating an art mural with vegetables. Now it was

in the grownup’s minds for the remainder of the day. Not only did the children remember, but also led the adults that day. And of course, the adults couldn’t help but let it ripple out to others. If you don’t know this song yet, search online for the videos. Or better yet, come to Chapel sometime and we will teach it to you. It might even pop into your mind just when you need it most.



From the Bishop's Desk

Greetings in the name of Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

I would like to begin by thanking all of the lay leaders that participated in the second annual "I have been elected to the council, now what?" zoom call. Close to 100 lay leaders participated and once again found the time to be worthwhile, helpful and informative. If you are reading this and are wondering why you didn't know about this gathering, please make sure that you receive our weekly e-news. If you are not on our mailing list, please subscribe to them by going to the synod website, where you will find a link you can click to subscribe. Once you are a subscriber, you will receive weekly synod newsletters, synod prayer requests, and other important updates as we are journeying together in Christ.

Sometimes I am asked what a Bishop is and what power they have? In a nutshell, as outlined by the South Dakota Synod constitution, the bishop is "this synod's pastor" (S8.12.). And as the pastor of the synod I am asked to "preach, teach, and administer the sacraments". My "primary responsibility (is) for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in ... (the SD) synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership of this synod and its congregations." Along with this main responsibility I am entrusted with ordaining pastors and deacons, attest/witness the extension of letters of call to pastors and deacons, exercise leadership, oversee and administer the work of the synod. Those are broad descriptors of what my day to day life as a Bishop entails, and they play out differently with each new day. But first and foremost I am called to be the pastor to the synod. I am honored to have been entrusted with this sacred call. Please know that I am always available for conversation, a cup of coffee (tea for me), and a visit to your congregation. I am eager to learn your story, hear your concerns and care for your faith formation.

Journeying in Christ with you,

Rev. Constanze Hagmaier

Bishop of the South Dakota Synod, ELCA



Middle School Confirmation Schedule

March

- * **2 -Ash Wednesday**
No Class please join us for worship
- * 9- 4th Commandment
- * 16- *Spring Break*-No class
- * 23- Choose Your Own Adventure
Service Project
- * 30- 5th Commandment



Wednesday Schedule

- 6:15-7:00 — Worship
- 7:00-7:30 — Large Group Teaching
- 7:30-8:00 — Small Group Discussion

Meeting times for fun events and service projects will vary depending on evening activity.
Watch your email and get connected to Spirit of Joy on our Tithely App!

Spirit of Joy Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m. at Spirit of Joy

I. Unfinished Business

- A. **Call Process Flexibility:** Discussed progress by the Call Committee to interview and select the best candidate. The process will be different depending on the status of the candidate (rostered vs. lay). No action taken.

II. New Business

A. Goal for Spring Building Debt Reduction Appeal

- a. Total Financial Goal: Following discussion, Andrew Hewitt moved and Heather Krzmarzick seconded to approve a total financial goal of \$1.25 million for the spring building reduction appeal
- b. Campaign Benevolence Goal: Following discussion, Andrew Hewitt moved and Heather Krzmarzick seconded to approve a campaign benevolence goal to give a \$5000 benevolence gift for every \$250,000 received (\$25,000 total). Motion carried.
- c. Twelve Days of Prayer Devotional Guide: Leadership Team to develop the guide.

- B. **Proposal for Additional Storage:** Pastor Eric Ohrtman moved and Kendra Krueger seconded to approve the purchase of the storage cabinets as presented using Thrivent Choice funds. Motion carried.

- C. **Building Expansion Funds:** Pastor Eric Ohrtman moved and Chad Wolff seconded to move the Building Expansion funds in the Building fund. Motion carried.

III. Meeting Review and Lord's Prayer: The meeting was adjourned following the Lord's Prayer.

Next Leadership Team Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Financials through January 31, 2022

Checking Account:

General Fund	\$69,058.01
Building Fund	\$4,617.82
Donor Restricted	\$37,090.69
Sunday School	\$111.44
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00

Savings Accounts:

Building	\$154,867.16
Donor Restricted	\$69,473.16
Total Cash Balance	\$339,778.38

	January 2020	January 2021	January 2022
Attendance	1711	???	1202
General Offering	\$ 94,800.15	\$ 54,548.07	\$ 50,858.83
Building Offering	\$ 54,729.02	\$ 41,682.97	\$ 12,185.16

Capital Campaign Totals

Pledged: \$2,478,485
Received as of January 31, 2022: \$2,198,339.17

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$50,860.80
Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry	\$55,658.07
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	- \$4,797.27

Odds & Ends

Food on the Fourth

Beginning in March, we will begin collecting the Food of the Month for Charis Ministries' Food to You program. We will collect the following items instead of a variety of nonperishable groceries for Feeding South Dakota.



March —Cereal

April —Peanut Butter

May - Tuna & Tuna Helper

Lent Journey

So many steps and so far away, but if we work together...the designation becomes a reality.

During the 40 days of Lent we will walk the journey from Sioux Falls to Jerusalem – 6400 miles. Please register for the journey by emailing Jan Noer at janrognoer@gmail.com. Keep track of the miles you walk, run, skate, bike or swim, 2300 steps = mile and send your steps (or miles) to Jan every Tuesday (Lent begins March 2nd). Jan will track the combined progress on a map. This could be an individual activity, or a family activity – if your family takes a hike, all steps count! As New Kids on the Block sang “Step by Step”, let’s make this journey!



1. Register with Jan Noer at janrognoer@gmail.com
2. Track your miles (include your whole family)
3. Send your miles to Jan every Tuesday during Lent (beginning March 2nd)

Thrivent Choice Dollars

If you're an eligible Thrivent client and have Choice Dollars available to direct, please keep Spirit of Joy in mind. The deadline to direct Choice Dollars through Thrivent is March 31. All Choice Dollars we receive in 2022 will go toward the Van Fund to help maintain our current vehicle and raise money toward a future upgrade. Thrivent resources are available at the Welcome Center in the gathering space. Find more info online at thrivent.com/thriventchoice.



Joyful Moments

Family Fun Night

February 4

Join us at the next Family Fun Night this summer!

Details coming soon.



Mental Health Check In

On February 13, Pr. Jeff revealed the secret that sometimes we preachers direct a sermon at a specific individual, hoping that others might listen in and hear the gospel. Today, I'm preaching to myself. I hope you might hear good news. Here are just a few of the things that I've learned this month.

Sleep. Anxiety. Stress. Mental Health. The parenting challenges that come along with them. And, the social stigma still attached to mental health weigh heavily on our partners and among our community. The good news: 1. You are not alone (see Michele Vogel's staff feature for an invitation to conversation), and, 2. God loves you. The whole, honest, genuine, created in the divine image you. -Pr. Eric



What I learned: Sleep and stress management are delicate processes that are impacted by a wide variety of factors. Our bodies release chemicals in a 24-hour cycle, nudging us to do activities at certain times. Each cycle is called a circadian rhythm. In laymen's terms chemicals build up through the course of our waking hours and sleep plays an important part in their regulation. Sleep health and stress management are complex and delicate processes involving the reception of light and the processing of hormones that are impacted by a huge variety of factors including diet, exercise, stress factors such as workplace and social media, our daily routine, and even our sleep environment. **What I can do: Take fewer naps. Drink less caffeine. Turn off Facebook and Instagram. Get more regular exercise. Remember to set the furnace down before bed. Sleep in the dark.**



What I learned: Teenagers typically require nine+ hours of sleep per night. In teens, melatonin is naturally produced about three hours later in the 24-hour sleep cycle than adults. This keeps them up late, and when they wake early, they are still producing melatonin. But, in the last 150 years, we've made it worse. The wonderful advent of artificial light and electrically controlled environments, means that we stay up later and sleep in warmer environments than we did for 300,000 years, both negative factors for being well rested. The addition of devices producing blue light and playing into the anxiety/insomnia/addiction cycle means that in the last 40 years we've seen a dramatic shift in the average duration of sleep and the frequency of both interrupted and short duration sleep. That means that all of us are off our game, but for teens, especially, that leaves them feeling perpetually drowsy, affects their ability to learn, and increases their reported anxiety and responses to stress. **What I can do: Set good boundaries and model good behaviors regarding devices and use of social media. Establish and maintain nighttime routines including the timing of events and putting limitations on specific types of food and beverages.**





What I learned: The pandemic and the accompanying litany of factors including societal division and social isolation have wreaked havoc on our mental health. While the results of studies vary widely, they do all seem to agree that the number of people 13+ who are reporting symptoms of anxiety and depression has increased dramatically. A reputable study by the Kaiser Family Foundation indicates that more than 4 in 10 Americans have reported this category of symptoms, up from 1 in 10 prior to the pandemic. These numbers become terrifying when you isolate students and mothers. 56% of students have self-reported symptoms of anxiety and depression including radically increased suicidal thoughts and substance use. Meanwhile, 49% of mothers indicate the same struggles, with researchers pointing out that they have disproportionately carried the burden of schooling and childcare. **What I can do: Seek professional help. There are wonderful mental health professionals throughout our community and the symptoms of anxiety and depression are highly treatable. Talk about my own struggles. Invite others into safe spaces for mutual care, prayer, and support.**



What I learned: Among kids in affluent communities, where pressures to achieve and succeed are common, these self-reported indicators are actually 1.5-2x higher than the national average. Not too long ago I was part of a City of Sioux Falls study group about the faith-based response to Covid-19 and as we looked at a wide range of statistics from the city, I

noticed that the rate of Domestic Violence in 57108 is within 1% of 57110. I asked about it because I would have assumed it to be much lower/different. The health care professional instead shared how folks in our neighborhood have far more resources, skills, and abilities to mask/hide these truths and those abilities are both learned early and carry over into a myriad of other mental/social/emotional health issues. Like you, I want my kids to do well, and I celebrate their achievements. There's nothing wrong with that. However, I have to remember that their value in my life and my love for them is not in direct correlation to swim times or dance results. Of late, we have been talking in worship about how our identity is rooted in God's loving claim placed upon us in baptism. For Martin Luther that meant that when he was hardest on himself he would return to the font and in fits of angst cry out again and again, "I am baptized." In all else. Above all else. You are baptized. I am baptized. We are baptized. **What I can do: Model how to fail and grow. Learn something new in front of your children or share stories of struggles on the road to success. Practice regular affirmations that are not related to achievements, accomplishments, or events.**

 **What I learned: The typical American makes close to 35,000 conscious decisions every day.** Eliminating even a few by establishing routines will have a positive effect on your mental health. For me, one of the most interesting characteristics of our society's "heroes" is how they manage this particular stressor. Steve Jobs famously tried to eat only apples and wore the same outfit day after day. Elon Musk has sought to eliminate all personal possessions and live as simply as possible. Warren Buffet lives in the same house, drives the same car, and eats the same breakfast for the last 30+ years. Learn more at thedecisionlab.com. **What I can do: Establish routines. Rely on core values. Establish clear goals and priorities.**

 **A final truth and permission to step out of the cycle: "Poor sleep and anxiety are intimately linked.** When we are anxious our sleep is disturbed and when our sleep is disturbed, we become anxious." Eti Ben Simon, a neuroscientist and a sleep researcher at The Center for Human Sleep Science in UC Berkeley wrote. It is a vicious cycle. **What I can do: Give myself permission to rest. Claim my identity as child of God as enough. Foster the activities and relationships that bring me joy. Stop the activities and relationships that cause me anxiety or to lose sleep.**

Beloved, God loves you. Not because you have economic value, add aesthetic beauty, or have achieved such great heights, but because he knit you together in your mother's womb to be fearfully, wonderfully, and fully you. Flawed. Sinful. Broken and hurt. In need. Imperfect. Forgiven. And, as Spirit of Joy, that's how we love you. You are enough...and that's really good news.

Sources

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