

WIND SWEPT



Spirit of Joy

Monthly Newsletter

October 2026

"Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty." -Matthew 13: 18-23

For 24 years, Spirit of Joy has thrived in the good soil of its Core Values as rooted in Jesus who is the Christ. Through those years people and programs have come and gone, but the Core Values, the Purpose Statement, and the commitment to being a House of Prayer for All Peoples have never wavered. Today, we are exploring what that will look like in light of the following priorities. The Leadership Team is working with Core Ministry Teams to define goals under each priority and we are readying ourselves for the activity that will bring life to these words. In all of those decisions we are doing our best to communicate regularly in variety of ways so that you have every chance to understand and own your ministry. We are choosing depth over breadth whenever there's a choice to be made. And, we are working to involve more of you every day so that we might expand the shared ownership of our mission and ministry. What does that look like?

Worship is our anchor, where we experience Christ's love in community.

We seek excellence at every turn. We continue to improve our sound system and utilize volunteers in the best ways we know. New readers, greeters, bread bakers, and communion servers will start this winter. A different family will greet you for worship, reiterating our Purpose Statement each week throughout the fall. We'll gear up for the festival days that are Reformation Sunday and All Saints (join us for the Prayer Walk). And, we'll look to you for leadership of Holden Evening Prayer.

Relationships: Without regard to race, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, lifestyle, or anything else, we know each other, we show up for each other, because all people matter to God.

We've kickstarted our programming and welcomed back a number of small groups and relational ministries. Planning has begun for a new young adult ministry in the new year. We're exploring deeper relationships with partner ministries and considering how our facilities and our resources of time and talents might be a blessing to them. The new opportunity here is to nominate community organizations as potential Featured Ministry Partners. Those nine ministries help us to narrow our focus and seek a transformational impact through Bold Service and Extravagant Generosity.

Sustainability: Spirit of Joy is here for the long haul. We will steward resources to ensure sustainability.

Our Extravagant Generosity Team is doing excellent work taking your input about the future of our campus and putting together a proposed Campus Use Plan for your Leadership Team to consider. The Endowment Team continues to pursue the goal of raising \$100,000 in 2026 (we still need about \$18,000 to complete our matching gift campaign). The new opportunity here is the disbursement of \$11,000 from the Endowment Fund. The Budget Transparency meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 27th at 7pm and will be led by your Budget Team for the first time. And, as we enter the new year we'll ask you to help us reduce our debt load so that we might flourish for years to come.



~ Pastor Eric

We're bearing fruit, Spirit of Joy, because you... are good soil!

What's Happening in Worship @ SoJ

Our liturgy for this fall is built around our Core Value Sermon Series. Most of the time we focus on what are called “Common Threads”. Those are the pieces of worship that hold our season together no matter the musician, preacher, or presider. This season those are:

The Welcome

We begin with the emphasis version of our Purpose Statement:

WELCOME everyone.

GROW everyday.

SEND everywhere.

Taken from the work done by our Strategic Visioning Process we hope to highlight who we are by asking different families to introduce themselves every week and lead this simple welcome. The response sung by the whole is the Dakota Road song, “All are Welcome”.

The Sung Response to Confession

The sung response to confession is a prayer to God that we sinners might be remembered before God. It's taken from St. Dysmas' on the cross, “Jesus, remember me...”.

The Spirit Intercedes for Us around the Prayers

Changing the prayer response helps us to remain alert during the prayers. This particular response is especially beautiful. This season's response is a quotation of Romans 8:26.

The Sending Blessing.

And, the Sending Blessing reinforces the Core Values Series by holding them all together as we prepare to depart each week.

Along with these Common Threads, the Gospel Acclamation will change to match our focus value each week. Written by the Core Ministry Teams they remind us of those values we share as we prepare to hear the Good News of Jesus.



Indoor Walk of Remembrance

Sunday, November 1 | 4:00-5:00 PM | Shalom Center

Please submit names for the luminaries
online at spiritofjoy.net/signups



Wednesdays Nov. 4, 11, & 18 @ 7pm

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

Learn and practice different modes of contemplative prayers with two of the leaders of the practice in South Dakota. Deep quiet. Greater concentration. Greater connection to God.

Irene Chang and Deacon Denny Davis



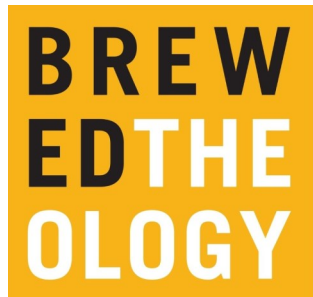


Faith Formation



Brewed Theology | Tuesday, October 20 | 7PM @ Charlie's Pizza

Pre-reading material available online: spiritofjoy.net/signups



Christian Nationalism is a problem. It hijacks Christianity, and the name of our servant-savior whose power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9), for the establishment of its own kingdom and power. Let's talk about it.

Brewed Theology meets the **3rd Tuesday** of every month:

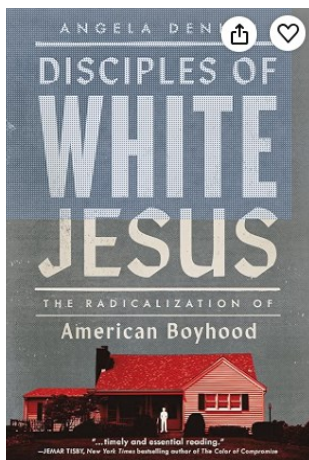
Christian Nationalism: Oct. 20

Political Church: Nov. 17

Creation Care: Dec. 15

Books that Matter | Meets the 1st Tuesday @ 7PM

Monthly sign up is available: spiritofjoy.net/signups. Check online to see what book will be ordered next.



Tuesday, October 6 - "Falling Upward" by Richard Rohr
Discussion: 7PM @ Altered Species Ales

Tuesday, November 3 - "Disciples of White Jesus" by Angela Denker
Order book online by October 1; Discussion: 7PM @ Charlie's Pizza
BONUS: Join Pr. Eric on Saturday, Oct. 3. Author Angela Denker will be at Our Savior's Lutheran for a lecture and conversation at 6:30pm. The lecture is titled, "Finding Our Bearings: Recognizing Christian Nationalism and Violent Masculinity while Following Jesus Faithfully".

"A Bigger Table" by John Pavlovitz: Dec. 1

"Braving the Truth" by Rachel Held Evans: Jan. 5

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Confirmation Sunday • 10 Grade Milestone
Sunday, October 25 | Both Services



10th Graders, their parents, baptismal sponsors, confirmation mentors, family members, friends, and all partners of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church will be a part of this blessed experience as our students move to another level of their faith formation.

Fall **BACKYARD PARTY**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4 | 5-7PM

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups

Bring your own chair and beverage. We'll provide s'mores, hot dogs and pumpkins to decorate



YOU'RE INVITED...

indoor

TRUNK
or
Treat

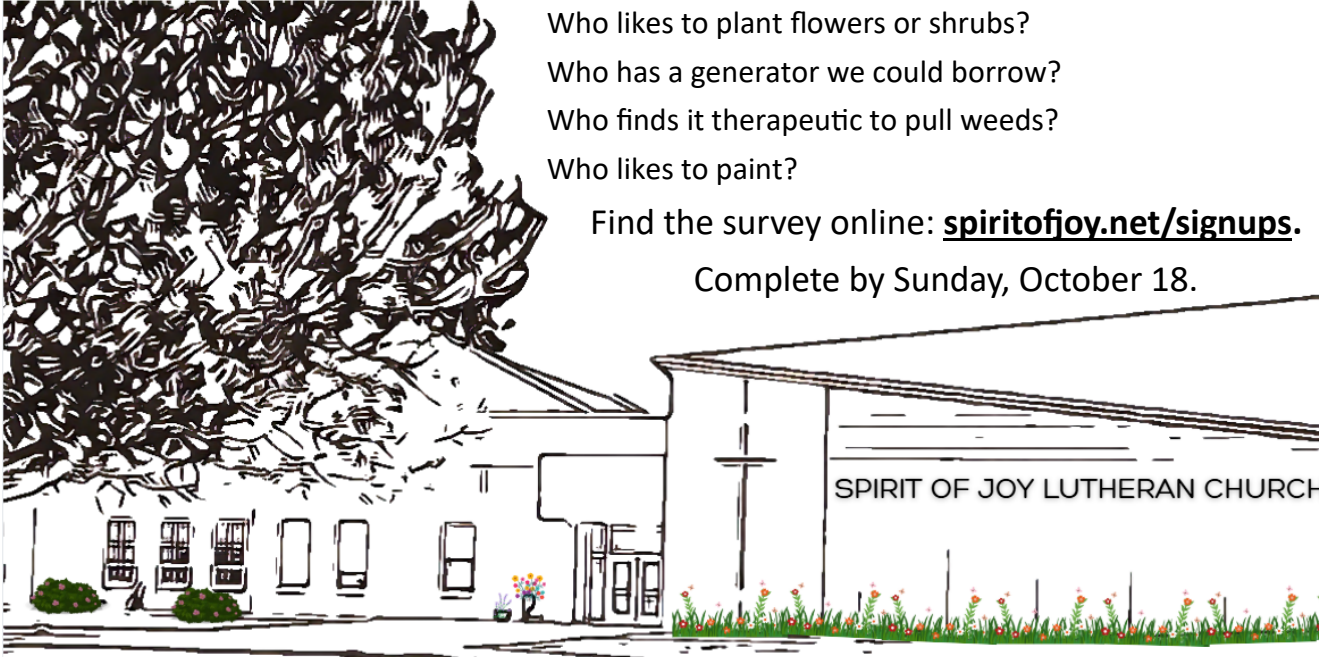
**SPIRIT OF JOY LUTHERAN CHURCH
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28 | 6:30-7:30PM**



The Gardenfather is making you an offer you can't refuse.

Here's an offer you can't refuse...

Please take a brief survey to help us find the skills, talents and resources in the congregation to help maintain our facility and grounds. Help us connect the dots between needs and partners.



Who likes to plant flowers or shrubs?

Who has a generator we could borrow?

Who finds it therapeutic to pull weeds?

Who likes to paint?

Find the survey online: spiritofjoy.net/signups.

Complete by Sunday, October 18.

NEW PARTNER CLASS

Interested in becoming a ministry partner of Spirit of Joy?



Sunday, October 11 | 12:15 - 2:30 PM

Come for Lunch, Fellowship, Learning



Scan QR to
Sign up today

Creation Care Corner



*“For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around us lies: Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise” – ELW 879, **For the Beauty of the Earth***

Once again, it's fall and for some of us, all things pumpkin. Of course, there are so many reasons to offer God praise in autumn. There are beautiful sunrises and sunsets. The leaves are starting to put on a beautiful show. There are football games, soccer, volleyball, cross country, tennis and cheer/dance competitions to attend. Homecoming events abound. There are sweaters, sweatshirts, cozy sweats and pajama pants to lounge in. There's a return of hot chocolate, cider, and soups. Harvest time is here. There is time to gather, slow down a bit (make it happen!) and reflect. God is good! If we just take the time to see, He has bestowed countless gifts to enjoy in all the seasons, even in times of uncertainty and struggle.

Here is a friendly reminder that the City of Sioux Falls has leaf and branch dropoff sites that are open from **September 12 to November 29**. The locations include **North Lyon Boulevard** near the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds, which can be accessed via West 12th or West Madison Streets. The other location is **Chambers Street** just west of the Household Hazardous Waste Facility at 1015 E Chambers Street with access via Cliff Avenue. **Hours** are **Monday-Saturday 9a-5p** and **Sundays from noon to 5p**. This is free and available for the Sioux Falls Regional Landfill area that includes Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Minnehaha, and Turner Counties. Another friendly reminder is that this is for residential use only. Please put your branches and leaves in separate piles. Remove all materials from plastic bags before unloading. Paper bags are accepted.

Also, you **can** take your pumpkins to the dropoff sites when you are done with them, and we encourage you to do so. Why? Decomposing pumpkins in landfills eventually turn into methane gas, which is extremely harmful to our climate. When you take them to the dropoff site, they are composted. Please remember to grab some of their compost in the spring!!

Did you know that Illinois is the top producer of pumpkins in the US? In central Illinois, farmers produce 85% of the world's canned pumpkins. Further, they're starting to use more regenerative farming methods to reduce emissions and attract natural pollinators. Some of the techniques they're using include rotating their crops and decreasing use of chemical fertilizers.

If you're composting at home or here at Spirit of Joy, make sure you cut the pumpkins into smaller pieces before adding them to the pile. Remember, "Smash It, Don't Trash It!"

*“For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.”*





The \$50,000 Matching Gift Campaign got off to a great start but has stalled at approximately \$32,000 in gifts. We need an additional \$18,000 in donations by the end of the year to meet the \$50,000 matching threshold, therefore doubling the impact to \$100,000. This philanthropic challenge offers a tremendous opportunity to meet our ultimate total Mission Endowment Fund goal of \$250,000. Please consider investing now in SoJ's future!

Mission Endowment Fund Balance

Previous YE Balance \$141,606.87

2026 YTD \$64,193.50

Total \$205,800.37



For more information on Mission Endowment Fund, visit:

spiritofjoy.net/mission-endowment-fund-2



BUILDING OUR BUDGET TOGETHER

2027 BUDGET PLANNING IN PROGRESS

How your input helps shape the ministry of Spirit of Joy

THE BUDGET PROCESS *From team ideas to a congregational vote.*



Why your commitment matters

Spirit of Joy tracks year-over-year pledge data to estimate the total giving for the coming year. This information helps the Leadership Team make informed decisions about ministry priorities and the annual budget.

MEET THE BUDGET TEAM

A small team helping guide the process.



BUDGET TEAM

Becky Amdahl
Treasurer & Team Lead
Tracy Dahl-Web
Jared Ducommun
Josh Swanstrom

BUDGET SNAPSHOT

As of August 31, 2026

\$563,271.91

spent of

\$942,000.65 budgeted



59.8%
of the annual
budget spent

A QUICK REMINDER ABOUT ONLINE GIVING



Do you have a recurring gift set up on Tithely or Simply Giving? Don't forget to update your giving online. Spirit of Joy cannot make changes on your behalf, even if you submit a commitment form for a new amount.

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

Outreach Opportunities

Featured Ministry Partner: Liberia Mission-New Dawn Learning Center

The academic year ended with thirty two students, three graduating from kindergarten and three graduating from 6th grade. To keep the children engaged with learning, a vacation school was offered with twenty-two students. These students and teachers know how to celebrate.



The roofing is complete on buildings one and two, thanks to the generosity of Simple Supper for Kids (SSKids) Greeley, Colorado, Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, and Grace Lutheran Church in Parker.



As the new school year begins, the most pressing needs are for teacher salaries, \$12,000 for the year, tuition scholarships for students whose families cannot afford to pay \$200 per year, and the ongoing feeding ministry about \$4,000 for the year.

Spirit of Joy partners will have an opportunity to learn more about Liberia and the New Dawn Learning Center as part of the October mission of the month.

New Dawn Learning Center Advisory Committee, Larry Schoeszler, chair.

FOOD TO YOU

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

MESSIAH NEW HOPE
5001 E MADISON ST

Sign up: spiritofjoy.net/signups



Annual Budget Transparency Meeting

Tuesday, October 27 @ 7PM

See the draft budget for 2027. Ask questions, Provide input. Share in Mission & Ministry.

Financials through August 2026

Checking Account:

General Fund	\$26,440.70
Building Fund	\$2,579.91
Donor Restricted	\$140,133.13
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00

Savings Accounts:

Building	\$117,724.16
<u>Donor Restricted</u>	<u>\$41,435.34</u>
Total Cash Balance	\$332,873.34

	August 2024	August 2025	August 2026
Attendance	876	1132	1147
General Offering	\$ 48,140.53	\$ 46,279.78	\$ 59,965.43
Building Offering	\$ 18,096.19	\$ 2,966.92	\$ 2,579.91

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$561,331.31
<u>Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry</u>	<u>\$563,274.91</u>
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	- \$1,943.60