
WINDSWEEP

Monsters Everywhere

John spoke up, “Teacher, we saw a man using your name to expel demons and we stopped him because he wasn’t in our group.” Jesus wasn’t pleased... -Mark 9:38-39

There are monsters among us. Surely you’ve noticed. The reports pour in by the hour. They are coming for you and me, as I write this, and as you read this. They are atheists, immigrants, Republicans, Democrats, people wearing masks, people not wearing masks, protestors, gun owners, black people, brown people, socialists, conservatives, evangelicals, rich, poor, and many others “not in our group.” When some of us were children we feared monsters under our beds; now they seem to be everywhere—or so we are told.

We usually respond to monsters with fear. When we are threatened, when our life or way of living is endangered, it is rational and reasonable to fear what threatens us. We might flee; or we might angrily attack the monster. The most important thing in the moment is to escape or demolish the threat.

The disciples saw a “monster” when they met a stranger doing the same thing they were doing in Jesus’ name. The problem was the stranger was an outsider. Not one of the twelve. Who knew what kind of bad theology he was inserting into his exorcisms? So the disciples put a stop to it, and apparently bragged to Jesus about taking steps to eliminate this threat. Jesus was not pleased.

Jesus repeatedly redefines many who we’ve decided are threats or enemies. Dan White Jr., in his book *Love Over Fear*, puts it this way:

We turn people into monsters when we no longer see them as we see ourselves. Our status, enlightenment, education, race, theology becomes our comparative contrast against another. It makes us feel superior, although most of us would never publicly admit that. People don’t have to do heinous evil things for us to see them as monsters; we just have to feel a tad better than they are. Something about their life feels offensive to us. Something about their politics or morals feels repulsive to us.

This is not to say there is no such thing as evil among us, or terrible injustice that requires courageous resistance. It is to say that Jesus calls us away from fearfully rejecting the others “not in our group” whatever that group is, and to look for the God of love before us and around us. Fear comes naturally, but love is our calling.

Pastor Jeff Eisele

Financials through July 31, 2020

Checking Account	
General Fund	\$68,691.86
Building Fund	\$76,879.41
Donor Restricted	\$12,083.24
Sunday School	\$1,113.03
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00
Savings Accounts	
Building	
Donor Restricted	
Total Cash Balance	\$492,860.97
Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$358,547.74
Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry	\$359,058.44
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	(\$483.10)

	July 2018	July 2019	July 2020
Attendance	1116	1105	N/A
General Offering	\$41,198.17	\$45,102.49	\$46,344.59
Building Offering	\$10,919.33	\$89,732.26	\$84,179.08

Capital Campaign Totals

Pledged	\$2,478,485
Received as of July 31, 2020	\$1,413,071.40

Regarding Holy Communion Instruction

Attention parents of this year's 2nd graders!

Due to the pandemic, last spring's Holy Communion instruction was postponed. We will offer a make-up session on Saturday, October 3 from 9:00 to 10:30 am. Contact Deacon Katherine to RSVP at family@spiritofjoy.net

We want families to feel safe and under no pressure to participate at this time. If families choose to wait until next spring they are welcome to join the spring class. Date TBD.

Spirit of Joy Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2020 @ 6:30 pm via Zoom

I. Unfinished Business

A. Building Expansion

- 1. Pre-construction Pay Application #1 March 2020:** Ron Risty moved and Jodi Hanson seconded to approve this one time pre-construction payment. Motion carried.
 - 2. Pay Application #5 August 2020:** Jodi Hanson moved and Brad Tams seconded to approve the payment of \$336712.34 as noted on the Application and Certificate for Payment from Journey Group Companies (Invoice #201101-05). Motion carried.
 - 3.** Work is nearing completion in the existing building. The new entrance is on schedule for September 25, 2020. Darlene Weber Scott is investigating ability for HVAC system to be upgraded to filter the coronavirus.
- B.** MIF requires a detailed request each time the loan is accessed. The new office manager will need to be trained how to do this.
- B.** Darlene Weber Scott and Ron Risty discussed the process for hiring the new office manager. Heather Wald was offered the position and will begin on August 31, 2020. She will receive a benefit package as discussed at previous Leadership Team meetings.
- C.** See III-G and III-I-2
- D.** Motion by Carole Chell and seconded by Jodi Hanson to approve Pastor Jeff's request for sabbatical from mid May to early August 2021. Motion carried.

II. New Business

A. Safe Space Protocols and Practices

- 1.** Face coverings in our building: Will be required in the building. Masks will be available and signs will be placed around building.
 - 2.** Extra cleaning and disinfecting help: Brad Tams will check with Deb to see if she will need extra help. Rooms, chairs, etc. will need to be cleaned after each use.
 - 3.** Locking preschool classrooms: Will be locked when not in use by preschool to keep little ones safe.
- B. Avera PACE Program:** Offers a volume discount on items such as cleaning supplies, office furniture, etc. to non-profits and churches. There is no commitment as far as amount that needs to be spent but most likely would save SoJ thousands of dollars. Informally approved.
- C. August Benevolence:** Brad Tams moved and Michelle Stanek seconded to make the following benevolence payments. Motion carried.
- 1.** Pine Ridge Retreat Center \$1000
 - 2.** Pueblo de Dios \$1000
 - 3.** Shetek Lutheran Ministries \$1000
 - 4.** ILFE: Lutheran Church of Nicaragua \$1000

III. The meeting was adjourned following the Lord's Prayer.

Next Leadership Team Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, September 17 at 6:30 pm.**

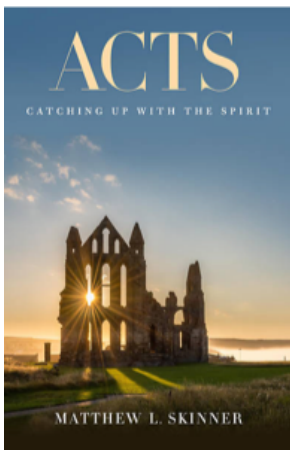
Faith Formation

Three Year Old Milestone - Bibles and Blessings

Calling families of **3 year olds!** We be contacting you to set a time to safely deliver your child's new **Spark Story Bible!** This year we will bring the blessing TO YOU and offer a warm "welcome" to your child as they enter Sunday School this year. We'll have more information to share, and we'll offer a blessing for your family – all this, in about 10 minutes - in the safety of your **DRIVEWAY!** We're hoping to deliver Bibles on Saturday morning, September 12, or Sunday afternoon, September 13. We'll be in touch! Any questions in the meantime, contact Deacon Katherine Eisele family@spiritofjoy.net



Fall Sunday Forums are on hold while we work out our worship plans. But adult faith formation is not on hold! Your personal devotional readings using Taking Faith Home, your Bible, and other devotional materials available are wonderful ways to continue to feed your spirit.



In addition, we will offer a fall series: **“Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit.”** How did the early church endure all the trials and dangers of their day? How can we learn from and be inspired by their witness? This six week series will begin late September. Sessions will be Thursday evenings via Zoom and Friday mornings in our new, larger gathering space. Author, Rev. Dr. Matt Skinner, is Professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. His writing is informative and accessible to old and new Bible readers.

More details and a sign up on our website are coming soon. Please indicate your interest so we may order enough copies of the book. Questions? Contact Deacon Katherine Eisele family@spiritofjoy.net

Three Is Enough (TIE) Groups

In a time of uncertainty and trial, we take comfort by gathering together, don't we? But in this Covid-19 pandemic, that has been difficult and unwise. Still, companionship is so important.

Are you seeking a way to have fellowship with other Spirit of Joy partners? One way we can do this is through **TIE groups**. Soon you will be invited to participate in **three-somes** (three people) that will gather on their own for an hour of conversation and sharing. Maybe it's outside at a coffee shop. Maybe in a park. Maybe in your backyard. We will provide resources for conversation starters and a simple Bible verse to read. The rest is up to you. You'll be asked to meet for just six weeks (while the weather is still nice) and then determine afterwards if you wish to continue.

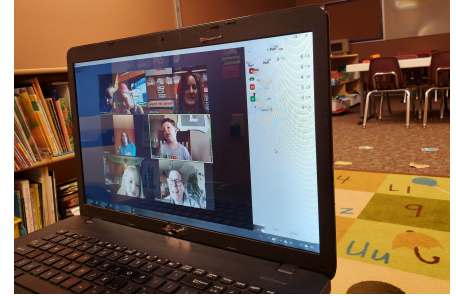
TIE groups have been a blessing to Spirit of Joy partners in the past. It is a simple – limited time commitment – to get to know two other partners/friends of Spirit of Joy, and a way to break out of our isolation.

There's no pressure or expectation to participate, but I think you may be surprised by the rewards!

Watch future emails for more information and instructions for sign up. Questions? Contact Deacon Katherine Eisele family@spiritofjoy.net

Spirit of Joy Preschool

We are so lucky! Last year was an adventure that taught new ways of doing preschool and it was fun. Preschool children were able to learn remotely using email, Zoom Simon Says, YouTube stories by Miss Amy and good old-fashioned home drop offs. Take home books and lesson activities were easily picked up as well. The year ended with a parade of preschool families driving through the parking lot. Best wishes to all the preschool graduates!



Over the summer, the preschool has been busy planning for fall. 15 preschool students will enter the doors this September 9 and 10. There are new students, returning students and siblings of preschool graduates attending this year.

We are preparing a place for each of them to learn and grow safely in several ways. Health precautions will be implemented with new cleaning protocols and schedules, outdoor learning when able, and masks worn throughout the day. Additionally, families will complete health screenings before preschool each day.



We wish a happy retirement to Miss Valerie, and welcome our new assistant teacher Miss Kendra. Kendra Namanny will work with children three years old on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. We are lucky to have her many talents and teaching experience here.

Finally, children will be able to stay here longer this year- enjoying more learning time and lunch together. The preschool day has been extended from two- and one-half hours to four hours! While the curriculum will be very similar including faith formation, Kindermusik, literacy and math- there is now more time to dig deeper and get to know one another better.

Guest visits and volunteering is currently on-hold but your preschool would love your help in other ways: snack donations and paper products are helpful or mix up homemade playdough; preschool car stickers are available with a free will donation- grab one in the new church office when it opens. And please continue to keep us all in your prayers as the new year begins. We thank you and wish you well.

Kindly,
Amy Cauble



Special thanks to: Sonja, Otis, Emmett, Craig, Dave, Joan, Terri, Gary, Suzanne, Jamie, Briggs, Jorja, Beckett, Alexis, and Jacey for their “extra help hands” at the preschool.

Support the preschool this October 24 with a Fall Festival Bike-a-Thon! Watch your email and Facebook for details coming soon!!

BeFriender Ministry

“Stay safe!” “Take care!” These words have been spoken again and again since about March 12. Five months is a long time and we are not through this pandemic yet. And now we are facing the challenges of moving back to the office after spending months working at home; sending our children to school or having them distant learning; deciding to eat in a restaurant or continue curbside pickup, how to get together safely with friends.

So how are you doing through all this? At first my big emotion was sadness. I was and am so sad that life has changed so suddenly and so dramatically. Then it became a new “adventure” or freedom to “do nothing.” Ron and I read more books, we put puzzles together, we cleaned the garage, learned to Zoom. But now it’s getting old. I am restless; I sometimes feel alone in this (even though I know almost all of you are going through this). I don’t know what is safe to do and what is not. It hangs over me.

Perhaps you are feeling some of the same feelings. Each of us is different in how we perceive and handle what is happening. Those who are working at home; working in hospitals, nursing home, grocery stores, and other essential jobs, those with families at home 24/7, and those of us who are retired.

Often we might feel we need someone other than family to say, “This is overwhelming!” “I feel so over loaded with working at home, teaching kids, cooking, parenting, and managing the home.” “I want to get together with my high school or grade school friends and have a good time, but am unsure how to do that safely.” “I am so tired of eating my own cooking and I am running out of ideas.”

Sometimes we are afraid to express these feelings to others, because we are concerned that we may be overburdening them because they are probably feeling the same things or we are afraid that our feelings are “different.” But the saying is true, “Grief shared is grief divided; joy shared is joy multiplied.” Sharing our frustrations, hurts, fears, loneliness is good for the soul (and our stomachs). It frees us up to look squarely at those feelings and weakens the power of those feelings on us. Talk with a friend. Give each other the space to unload what is being felt. You can also call a BeFriender. We are confidential listeners and willing to hear what you are feeling.

This isn’t over yet. We have a ways yet to go to get through this pandemic. We can help each other. We can be there for each other. We can hear each other and then pray for each other.

Linda Beckman
BeFriender Coordinator
605-759-4663

If you would like to talk to a Spirit of Joy BeFriender, please contact Linda Beckman or Pastor Christy.



A Listening Presence

Ministry Moments

Horace Mann

To kick off this unprecedented school year, we gathered items for the Horace Mann wish list, and we gave a tumbler to each staff member. Principal Tara Eckstain said, “Our cups runneth over!” It’s tough to see, but the photo on the right shows the staff displaying their tumblers.



Laundry with Love

We served our neighbors through Laundry with Love on Tuesday, August 25. This program, which is part of Church on the Street, provides funds and essential items for neighbors to do the simple but profound act of washing their clothes. We also provided 85 sack lunches for neighbors who participated.



Celebration for Amy Orr

On September 12, at the church parking lot starting at 10:30 am, we will be having a going away/thank you for all your hard work/baby shower celebration for Amy Orr. Partners can drive through the parking lot to say a thank you to Amy and there will be bins available along the curb that people can drop off a card or gift for her for either the coming baby and/or for her stepping away as office manager. Please wear a mask, and if you forget yours we will have some available for you, to be able to wave and yell blessings to Amy and family. Amy is registered for baby needs at Target. Please sign up online if you plan to come as we will have treats for everyone so would like to have an estimated count. You can sign up at spiritofjoy.net/signups.

We will serve with Food to You Mobile Food Pantry at Messiah New Hope Lutheran Church on Thursday, October 8. Sign up at spiritofjoy.net/signups.

Fall 2020 at Spirit of Joy

Weekly Worship

- **Sundays**- Plans are for us to worship outdoors until at least September 27, when our new main entrance and enlarged gathering space will be completed.
 - 8:30 am. – 30-minute Morning Prayer in Spirit of Joy prayer garden on the north side of our building (masks & physical distancing encouraged)
 - 10 am. – Worship with Holy Communion in the parking lot
- **Wednesdays** starting *Wednesday, September 9* at 6:15 pm. 30-minute “campfire” worship in the Spirit of Joy prayer garden on the north side of our building.

Faith Formation: K-5th Grade (Children of Joy)

- Virtual programming until at least Wednesday, October 14/Sunday, October 18
- Packet pick-up: Wednesday, September 9 (7 pm) OR Sunday, September 13 (after either worship service). If you cannot make either time, we will mail the packet to you.

Faith Formation: Middle School (Confirmation)

- Orientation/kick-off via Zoom – Wed, September 9 at 7:00 pm
- Small group training for small group leaders via Zoom- Wed, September 16 at 7:00 pm
- All small groups meet in person or via Zoom-Wed, September 23 at 7:00 pm
- Large group teaching via Zoom-Wed, September 30 at 7:00 pm

Faith Formation: High School

- Ninth graders: students will be paired with mentors within the next month. More information will be forthcoming.
- Tenth graders: Confirmation Sunday – Sunday, October 25 (one or two **afternoon** worship services, time TBD)
- 9th-12th grade high school ministry: dates and more information will be forthcoming.

Faith Formation: Adults

- In light of the changing plans for worship on Sunday mornings, Sunday Morning Forums are on hold.
- Plans are underway for Thursday evening/Friday morning studies! Dates and more information will be forthcoming.

