

WIND SWEPT

Spirit of Joy

Monthly Newsletter

September 2026

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. -Matthew 16: 13-18 (NIV)

Who do you say Jesus is? John the Baptist?

That makes sense. You've never seen him. The person in front of you gathers crowds and powerfully moves you to conversion of heart and soul.

Who do you say Jesus is? Elijah?

A prophet... the one who bridges the gap between life and death. He speaks with and for God, seeking justice and reconciliation until lifted into the heavenly realm.

Who do you say Jesus is? Jeremiah?

A prophet... the one who mourns. Quoted at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel when the people are trying to make sense of the slaughter of the innocents, this one looks at violence and death and sees a world turned upside down.

Who do you say Jesus is?

The messiah. The Son of the Living God. The one we waited for and still wait for. He who mourns the brokenness of our world and yearns to turn it right side up. He who bridges the gap between life and death for all time and for everyone. He whose love and devotion converts us from believers to disciples.

Who are you?

You are the rock on which Spirit of Joy is built. You are the one whose name is no longer Eric or Travis or Jason or Stacy or Sue or Heather or Luke, but is now "Beloved". You are the one who speaks God's word even when it feels pointless and absurd, because you know that God is steadfast and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

Who are we?

That's what the pages behind this reveal. We're people who give of our time and talents. We're people who invest in our children, ourselves, and our community. We're people who are discovering new ways to be that are rooted in the timeless values we share. We're imperfect and yet holy. We're Peter. With Jesus' name on our lips and in our hearts, we are the only rocks on which God can build. We're Jeremiah. Turning the world right side up. We're Elijah. Seeking justice and reconciliation for all. We're John the Baptist. Using our gifts on God's behalf. We're Spirit of Joy.



~ Pastor Eric

Communication Reminders

Website: spiritofjoy.net

Go to our website to sign up for serving opportunities and activities. Find links to our YouTube channel, giving through Tithe.ly and so much more.

Watch Your Email

- *What's Happening at SoJ* - arrives each Friday
- Links to weekly Bulletins and Worship services - arrives each Sunday
- *Windswept* - monthly on-line newsletter

Social Media

Follow SoJ on Facebook and Instagram. We encourage you to “like” posts and even comment - to help share SoJ with many other people!



facebook.com/spiritofjoylutheran



[spiritofjoy_sf](https://www.instagram.com/spiritofjoy_sf)



[spiritofjoy_sf](https://www.youtube.com/spiritofjoy_sf)

Spirit of Joy App



- Search “Tithely Church App” in your App Store
- Install Church App - Tithe.ly
- Click “Open” when it’s done installing
- Type “Spirit of Joy” in Church Name & find our logo
- Add the App to your Home Screen

Directory App



(only after your email is in our system)

- Install “Instant Church Directory” in your App Store
- Click open and create new login
- Add a family photo!

New Landing Page - beginning 9/13

Scan the QR Code found on the chairs in the Sanctuary. The QR code will take you to a landing page with links to the website for more ways to know what’s happening at Spirit of Joy!



What's Happening in Worship @ SoJ

Our Mission/Purpose

is to **WELCOME** people into a community of followers of Jesus Christ;
GROW with one another in faith and hope in Him;
SEND out one another as Jesus' compassionate servants in the world.

Our Values

Passionate Worship
Radical Hospitality
Lifelong Faith Formation
Extravagant Generosity
Bold Service

Our Key Messages

1. Jesus Christ is the way to life.

We believe Jesus is Lord (John 20:28), and that He has most clearly revealed who He is by His suffering love on a cross. Following Jesus is our first priority, and the way to experience life that is abundant (John 10:10), joy-filled (John 15:11), and everlasting (John 3:16).

2. All people matter to God and so they matter to us.

Jesus came into the world to offer grace and mercy to all persons no matter what path they have chosen in life (Luke 15:1-32; 19:10). We are committed to obeying Jesus' New Commandment (John 13:34-35) and to reaching out with the unconditional and everlasting love of Jesus to all people, just as they are, without regard to race, beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, lifestyle, or anything else.

3. Following Jesus is a life-long, growing experience.

When we meet God through the love of Christ, we are changed and impelled towards spiritual maturity (Philippians 3:13-14). For this reason we strive to bring people into an ever-growing relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19). This growth happens most often through participation in personal devotion, community worship, and small groups.

4. Every Jesus follower is called to and gifted for ministry.

We believe God calls every believer to ministry, and gives every believer special gifts and abilities for faithful living and serving (1 Corinthians 12). We are committed to helping people discern their call, realize and develop their spiritual gifts and abilities, and recognize opportunities to serve as the Body of Christ in the world.

5. God is continually at work in us to transform the world.

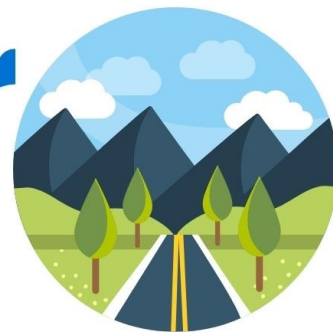
We believe God is at work here and now, through the Holy Spirit, to empower and equip us for carrying out our mission (John 14:26, Acts 2:1-42). We are committed to prayerfully receiving direction from the Spirit who inspires Christ-like living, bold and innovative serving, and a changed

Join us beginning Sunday, Sept. 13 as we return to a sermon series on our Core Values, an opportunity for Adult Education between Sunday services to dive deeper, and worship rooted in expressing all five!

ministry fair

ON THE ROAD...
TO HOME

& Fall Kickoff



Sunday
9/13

8:45am Worship
10:00am Faith Formation
11:00am Worship

Wed.
9/16

5:30pm Choir
6:30pm Worship
7:00pm Faith Formation
8:00pm Youth Group

7pm

6 Wednesdays beginning Sept. 16



THE REFORMATION

Presented by Rev. Dr. Lars Olson

FORWARD TOGETHER as Spirit of Joy

BOLD SERVICE BUDGET REVIEW

Your stewardship team reviewed the Bold Service budget to share the purpose and impact of key areas of our ministry.

BUDGET STATUS

Year to date Bold Service spending is about

56%

of the annual budget -

ON TRACK

for the first 7 months of the year.

Your generosity creates a

BIGGER IMPACT

1 REGULAR GIVING



Most ministry partners receive a regular gift.

Spent YTD: \$27,778 48% of budget

We are proud to walk alongside our 9 ministry partners who share Christ's love in so many ways.

Our Ministry Partners:

-Charis Ministries	-Horace Mann
-Church on the Street	-St. Dysmas
-Feeding SD	-New Dawn
-Lutherans Outdoors	Liberia
-Sharing the Dream	Mission
-Lutheran Social Services	

2 SYNOD BENEVOLENCE



The first check written every month.

Spent YTD: \$41,410 65% of budget

Our giving to the Synod is based on last month's total giving by our congregation. While it looks like we're over budget, we recently returned to the constitutionally expected 10% giving rate—six months ahead of schedule after temporarily reducing it to 7.5% in November 2024.

3 SHORT TERM NEEDS



A response to immediate needs.

Spent YTD: \$1,899 38% of budget

Provides short-term support to partners and non-partners. Funds are never given directly to the individual, but instead to the organization that connects them to resources or to the rent/utility company for direct bill pay. Policy allows for up to \$500 per partner household per year and \$25 to non-partners.

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP - filling the gaps for Food to You



Each week, the men's breakfast group collects an offering that is set aside to support Food to You when a need arises. Each month, around \$100 is collected.

\$1,300
available funds

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

Featured Ministry Partner

Nomination Form

More Information and the form
can be found at
spiritofjoy.net/signups

Deadline: October 1



Choir Rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 16

Join us on Wednesdays from 5:30-6:30PM. We rehearse weekly during the school year and sing once a month during worship. If you'd like to try it out for the fall or closer to Christmas - that's okay! Can't make it right at 5:30 - that's okay! Can't make a full year commitment? Come when you can! Join us for a song or three. Highschool students are also welcome.





Faith Formation



Registration for PreK–High School

All new and returning students: sign up online at spiritofjoy.net/signups. Please fill out one form for each child participating in an education opportunity at Spirit of Joy. This includes Children of Joy PreK-5th Grade, Confirmation 6th-10th Grade, and 9th-12th Grade Youth Group. Faith Formation Kickoff is Sunday, September 13 & Wednesday, September 16.

Little Lambs | Begins Sunday, September 13

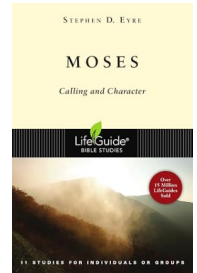
Newborns to 3 year olds are invited to this precious time of learning, singing, playing and sharing stories together. We meet once a month in Jordan Classroom from 10-11am. We would love for you to join us!

Women's Bible Study: Moses Calling & Character

Begins Thursday, September 10 @ 9AM

Sign up online: spiritofjoy.net/signups. \$15/book

As the one called by God to lead his people out of Egypt, Moses faced some significant challenges but through it all, God was faithful to guide and provide for Moses. This eleven-session LifeGuide Bible study by Stephen D. Eyre will open our hearts to the same God.



Adult Sunday School | Begins Sunday, September 13 | Galilee

Join us for our opening adult education offering... a look at our Core Values. What's the Key Message? What scripture is it rooted in? How do we understand it and seek to live it out?

Lifelong Faith Formation: Sept. 13

Radical Hospitality: Sept. 20

Bold Service: Sept. 27

Passionate Worship: Oct. 4

Extravagant Generosity: Oct. 11

Brewed Theology | Tuesday, September 15 | 7PM @ Jack Rose Social Club

Peruse church websites for their "About Us" pages on how they read the Bible, and you'll find modern examples of diverse and conflicting readings of the Bible. Words like "inerrant" and "literal" and "inspired" appear, as will key Bible verses and phrases used to back up (sometimes poorly) theology, social stances, and their view of the Bible. In short: the Bible is complex. How should we read it?

Brewed Theology is now scheduled for the **3rd Tuesday** of every month.

Christian Nationalism: Oct. 20

Political Church: Nov. 17

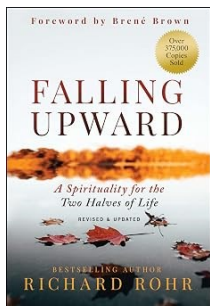
Creation Care: Dec. 15



Books that Matter | Tues, Oct 6 | 7PM @ Altered Species Ales| "Falling Upward" by Richard Rohr

Signup @ spiritofjoy.net/signups (deadline for signup to have SoJ order your book is Sept. 1 \$20 to SoJ).

Most of us tend to think of life in chronological terms, but this book proposes a different paradigm. What looks like falling down can be experienced as falling upward—and is not necessarily connected with aging. This edition focuses on practical guidance to live a life of love and meaning in a world of suffering and challenge. Falling Upward is an invitation to living the gospel and a call to ongoing transformation.



Books that Matter is now scheduled for the **1st Tuesday** of every month.

"The Lord is My Shepherd" by Harold Kushner: Nov. 3

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

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



Great news! Our Mission Endowment Fund has received approximately \$8,000 in distributions from the ELCA Ministry Growth Fund from inception through June and we expect another \$3,000 the last two quarters. The current breakdown of potential disbursements by Sub-Fund is below. For the first time, we're excited to open the grant application process for the expected \$11,000 in disbursements from now until October 1. Submit your application online at spiritofjoy.net/signups.

Capital	\$1,988.84
Faith Formation	\$1,077.44
General	\$2,486.12
Mission Outreach	\$916.73
Nathan Berdahl	\$1,510.38

Mission Endowment Fund Balance

Previous YE Balance \$141,606.87
 2026 YTD \$61,826.55
Total \$203,433.42



For more information on Mission Endowment Fund, visit:
spiritofjoy.net/mission-endowment-fund-2

Creation Care Corner



It's back to school time and fall is coming up so maybe this is a fun time to talk about apples. Did you know that over 4.5 million tons of apples are produced in the US every year? Have you ever wondered what the environmental impacts of apples are?

It turns out that apples have a moderately negative impact on the environment. Some of the positive factors associated with apples are that their land requirements are fairly low, they have a moderate water requirement, and apple trees sequester carbon very well (meaning they capture carbon from the atmosphere and store it in the ground).

Some of the negative factors include they are mostly grown on monoculture farms. This means primarily one crop across a large area year after year. This makes them more susceptible to pest attacks and fungal disease infections if they aren't sprayed on a regular basis. As a result of this, unfortunately, they require a lot of pesticides, which are harmful to the environment.

Apples *can* be grown in a polyculture orchard, with many species growing together imitating the diversity of a natural ecosystem, but this is the *exception* rather than the rule in apple orchards.

Further, the waste generation of apples is high because they use plastic packaging, which as we know has low recycling value and high environmental harm for our land and bodies of water as well as long-term harm to our own bodies. Also, apple cores *can* be composted, yet only around 4% of compostable materials are actually composted, so they end up being food waste in a landfill emitting methane.

What can we do? Two easy things we can do is buy our apples from bulk and place them in a reusable mesh bag and do that each time we buy them. The next thing is to compost them or make friends with someone who composts. As you know, we have access to composting at Spirit of Joy. Just ask someone on the staff or from Creation Care Team or you can directly contact SoDak Compost. Here is their website <https://www.sodakcompost.org/> where you will find helpful information on how to get started. Their goal is to have a pick-up service at some point.

In the meantime, enjoy time at an apple orchard in God's great outdoors where you can meet other people enjoying the sunshine and fresh air, and listen to the sounds of children laughing and making memories. It's a wonderful fall activity and way to connect with others. Also, enjoy a recipe with apples and remember to compost your food scraps.

A synopsis of

1 Corinthians 13:

In every moral situation ask:

Will this show love to God?

Will it show love for others?

Will it show love for self?



Fresh Apple Bundt Cake

Blend 2 eggs and 2 cups sugar and add:

1/2 cup oil	2 cups flour
2 tsp soda	2 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp salt	4 cups diced apples
1 cup chopped nuts	1/2 tsp vanilla

Spoon into greased bundt pan. Bake 1 hour at 350°.
Cool 10 minutes and remove from pan.
Frost with cream cheese frosting.



Financials through July 2026

Checking Account:

General Fund	\$35,322.26
Building Fund	\$2,174.91
Donor Restricted	\$120,534.85
Reserve Fund	\$4,360.10
Petty Cash	\$200.00

Savings Accounts:

Building	\$126,312.40
<u>Donor Restricted</u>	<u>\$41,435.34</u>
Total Cash Balance	\$330,339.86

	July 2024	July 2025	July 2026
Attendance	591	433	540
General Offering	\$ 50,258.56	\$ 62,159.12	\$ 63,505.07
Building Offering	\$ 16,267.78	\$ 3,202.30	\$ 2,174.91

Year-to-date Income for Ministry	\$501,364.18
<u>Year-to-date Expenses for Ministry</u>	<u>\$494,765.17</u>
Net Income/Deficit for Ministry	\$6,599.01

2026 ENDOWMENT APPLICATIONS

AVAILABLE @
SPIRITOFJOY.NET/SIGNUPS.

DUE OCT. 1

\$11,000 AVAILABLE ACROSS
ALL FUNDS



General Fund



**Nathan Berdahl Mental
Health/Addiction Fund**



Capital Fund



Mission Outreach Fund



Faith Formation Fund

REQUESTS MUST BE MADE FOR OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE OF THE SOJ BUDGET. CONTACT JOEL CHRISTENSON WITH ?'S.



SoJ Women's Retreat

Saturday, September 26 | 9am-3pm

Guest Speaker: Rev. Erika Buller
\$50/person, registration available soon