

**St. John  
Lutheran Church**  
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod  
290 7th Street  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
[www.stjohnministries.net](http://www.stjohnministries.net)

**Office Hours:**  
Mon.-Thurs. 9:00am-3:00pm  
Phone: (208) 522-5650  
[office@stjohnministries.net](mailto:office@stjohnministries.net)

**Pastor**

Stephen Weems  
[pastorstephen83401@gmail.com](mailto:pastorstephen83401@gmail.com)

**Director of  
Christian Education**

Jacob Pralle  
[Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com](mailto:Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com)

**Licensed Lay Deacon**

Paul Petersen

**St. John Officers**

Bruce Mincher  
Chair, Board of Directors

Jim Werner  
Head Elder



**Sunday**

**In-Person Worship**  
9:30am

**9:30am Live-Stream:**

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnidahofalls>

**or:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqfTbbuM5U7-IFB7bVslQaQ>  
(click on "LIVE" tab)

**Communion every**  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday

**10:30am** - Fellowship

**10:45am**

- Sunday School
- Confirmation
- Youth Study
- Adult Bible Class

**Wednesday**  
**Bible Study - 10:00am**

# The *Gospel Gazette*

A Publication of St. John Lutheran Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho

November,  
2024

## Moving Beyond the Facade

In worship recently we discussed that Small Groups for the Red Letter Challenge give us the opportunity to be in community in which brothers and sisters in Christ may share themselves more deeply so that there is opportunity for needed and mutual prayer, support, encouragement and celebration.

Consider this prayer by Martin Luther:

*Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it.*

*I am weak in faith; strengthen me.*

*I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor.*

*I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether.*

*O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you.*

*I have sealed the treasures of all I have in you.*

*I am poor; you are rich, and you came to be merciful to the poor.*

*I am a sinner; you alone are true.*

*In me there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness.*

*Therefore, I will remain with you, from whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give. Amen.*

Before God, Luther removes the mask or facade that all of us are prone to wear. When we are enabled by God to gather together in Jesus' name and share the harder things of our personal lives, our Small Groups may become safe places that attract those who are

open to learning more about Jesus and how he works among and through his followers.

Luther's prayer puts to words his complete dependence upon the Lord as the needed source for all the reformer lacks. As a believer, Luther shares his daily, deep need for God.



May God fill us with the desire to be His authentic people in small groups of believers that are wide open to other needy sinners to join and grow to know the great love of Jesus.

**Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.**

John 2:6-7

Just as Jesus had the water jars filled in the miracle of Cana, he still fills his people today.

**In His Grace, Pastor Stephen**

This prayer of Martin Luther can be found online in blogs and articles, but it and 25 other prayers by him can also be found here:

McPherson, Thomas. *Prayers of the Reformers* Paraclete Press. Kindle Edition. .



*Save the Date!! Advent by Candlelight will be held Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. Watch for more details in the weekly bulletin. Tickets will be on sale in the coming weeks. Save time for this special event!*

*my flesh and my heart may fail,  
but god is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.*

*Psalm 73:26*

## **St. John offers care through the Stephen Ministry Program**

**Stephen Ministers** are congregation members trained by Stephen Leaders to offer confidential, high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through tough times. A Stephen Minister provides care to one person at a time, meeting with them once a week for about an hour.

**Care Receivers** are people - congregation members **and others** in the community - who receive care from a Stephen Minister. A person does *not* need to be a member at St. John (or of any faith community) to receive care. Care receivers are people struggling through a difficult time in life - experiencing grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or any other type of life crisis.



**If you, or someone you know, could benefit from meeting with a Stephen Minister, please let them know that this care is available to them.**

*Please contact the office to be put in-touch  
with a care coordinator.*

**Bunco** will be held Tuesday,  
November 12<sup>th</sup>,  
at 6:30pm.



Bring \$5 and a snack to share for "half-time"!



**Thank you** to all who contribute to "1st Sunday Food Offering". Many in our community are struggling to feed their families.

### **Needed in October:**

*cereal, canned pasta, peanut butter, chili,  
canned stew, \*\*monetary donations!*

*\*Generic brands are welcome.\**

**\*\*Since donations have been lower and the number of patrons needing help has greatly increased, the Food Basket is spending considerably more than in years past.**

**All donations are very appreciated!**

**\*\*\*For every \$1 given, the IFCFB can provide \$4.80 worth of food!!**

**PLEASE MAIL** financial contributions to:  
IFCFB, P.O. Box 2236, Idaho Falls, ID 83403

**Thank you for your faithful donations.** Meeting our budget allows us to share the Gospel Good News of Jesus!! Prefer to automate your giving? Simply go to the St. John web site: <https://www.stjohnministries.net> and click on the "Online Giving" button in the banner on the home page. You can also download the **VANCO Mobile** app for free from the App Store or Google Play. You can choose to give a one-time gift or set up a recurring gift as often as you like. If you have any questions, please call the office.



## September Board of Directors' Minutes

*(in order to allow time for minutes to be reviewed for accuracy, the minutes are published with a one-month delay.)*

September 15, 2024 In Attendance: Bruce M, Jeff P, Mark P, Beth O, Penny S, Jacob P, Ben W.

**Pastor's Report:** DCE Report (below and on page 6 of newsletter) **Elder's Report:** 1) Excited for Red Letter challenge and small group studies. Formal intro on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September. 2) Melissa at the Hope House has begun dental assistant training. 3) Northwest district all workers conference: Jacob to attend. **Treasurer's Report:** 1) Met with accountant. Went well. 2) August giving came in low due to summer slowdown. 3) Culver's drive for TNC check received, Papa Murphy's not yet received. 4) Red Robin on Friday, Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. 4) Future drive locations: Chic-Fil-A, Texas Road House, Blaze Pizza. **Properties Report:** 1) Broken window in youth room being fixed on the 19<sup>th</sup>. In good shape otherwise. 2) Contracts are written and in place for Snow removal and yard maintenance. 3) Dan Kahl still working on surge protector for whole building. **Old Business:** Property use form updated to include new security deposit amount. NHR grant update: Foundation for houses of worship.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

*(edited for space)*

## September 2024 ~ Pastor's Report

*(in order to allow time for minutes to be reviewed for accuracy, the minutes are published with a one-month delay.)*

**A)** Vacation beginning this Saturday. Back October 1. 1) Paul preaching 15<sup>th</sup> / 22<sup>nd</sup> 2) Hope House – Dental Hygienist Training started. Childcare is covered through partner contributions. **B)** Red Letter Challenge: Discussion around small groups ensued. 1) Encouragement outside the Church grounds. 2) Sunday Bible Study will be one of the small group. 3) Intro 29<sup>th</sup> and Kick-Off Oct 5<sup>th</sup> and continues for 7 weeks. **C)** Home visits continue. Was not able to visit Kent as he had Covid. **D)** Committal service last Saturday. **E)** Vision Bridge: Pastoral Leadership Institute with focus on Discipleship. 1) Vision – Immersion 1 2) Implementation – Immersion 2

## September 2024 ~ DCE Report

*(in order to allow time for minutes to be reviewed for accuracy, the minutes are published with a one-month delay.)*

**Sunday Educational Ministries:** 1) Children's Sunday School (w/ Morgan) 2) RALLY DAY Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> 3) Post-Confirmation Youth Bible Study: Jesus' "Stories" – Wrapping up our Summer study where we have taken a deep dive into Jesus' parables and gotten to the bottom of the TRUTH behind those captivating stories! Youth have discovered how the parables had multiple levels of meaning for His original listeners and still prove relevant for us as his followers today! 4) Adult Bible Study: The Chosen! Still going strong!! 5) Red Letter Challenge – Church Wide Discipleship Initiative! Excited to kick this off at the beginning of October!!! **Youth:** 1) THE NEXT CHAPTER (TNC) Youth Group We are back to our School Year Schedule. We will be meeting on SUNDAY nights from 5:30-7:30! 2) TNC & Confirmation Kicks Off THIS Saturday at Paul & Karen P.'s. 3) TNC Youth "At YOUR Place" Events! An opportunity we have been incorporating into TNC meetings! We've further expanded the ways for our Youth to grow deeper in their relationships with one another – by meeting one another (Literally) right where they are at! 4) Highschool Fall Retreat 2024 – St. John & Hope are slated to HOST Highschool Fall Retreat this year on November 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>. 5) TNC Flash Servant Event @ I.F. Community Food Basket! According to Dan K., our service is meeting the food basket at a time where there are record numbers in need! **Young Adults: No Host Brunch!** (at noon following worship & bible studies on 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays) Critical to continue spreading the word that we are providing early childcare for families with younger children! We want them to be able to make this opportunity! **2025 National Youth Gathering:** Fundraisers are ROLLING!!! THANK YOU! To all who joined us for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Dine2Donate at Papa Murphy's Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. 3<sup>rd</sup> D2D will be at Red Robin Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup> (ALL DAY). Dine2Donate Events will continue to take place once a month leading up to NYG in July! **Special Notes:** 1) Ryan Strehlow, Tim Kaufmann, and I partnered with Camp Perkins where we hosted the second annual South Idaho Youth & Family Ministers Retreat/Conference on August 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>! 2) 2024 Northwest District All Workers Conference – Seaside, Oregon will be held October 15<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>! Jacob's role in the Northwest District Young Leaders Initiative will require staying for an extra day on October 19<sup>th</sup>.



*Calling all foodies!!!* We are raising funds for our High-school youth to attend the 2025 National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, LA! Throughout the coming year, we are holding multiple “Dine 2 Donate Nights” where local businesses will support our TNC Youth’s trip to the NYG! *Join us for the one you’ve all been waiting for!!!* Our fifth D2D will be at Texas Roadhouse (2535 S. Hitt Road) on Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>!

The youth will be helping throughout the evening , so come enjoy a night out while supporting them!



*Church  
Potluck*

The potluck is on hiatus (due to Thanksgiving and Christmas). We look forward to seeing you in January!

## *Hosted!*

Join us Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, for an adult evening of fellowship at City Bagels (369 Shoup Ave.) Invite friends & bring an appetizer / dessert to share. Beverages are provided.



*Serve  
ONE  
ANOTHER  
IN  
love*  
GALATIANS 5:13

**Coffee & Conversation**  
time after Worship is a great time to meet new friends and strengthen bonds in our St. John family!

In order to offer this time of fellowship, we really need a host each week. Please sign-up to host if you haven’t hosted recently. You can host a Sunday by yourself, or share the fun & ask a friend to help!

The sign-up calendar is located on the counter where coffee is served.

*Treats are optional, and can be home-made or purchased. Thank you!*



## Hope Lutheran Church Holiday Fair

Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>  
9:00am ~ 4:00pm

On the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> & Hoopes  
Idaho Falls

Over 25 booths and exhibits  
of crafts, arts and gifts from  
Southeast Idaho!!

**Cinnamon Rolls & Pie served  
all day!** Soup and Sloppy Joes  
served **10am-2pm.**

## **CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE**

It’s almost time for a church directory update! **Please review how you are listed in the current directory and let Cheryl know if there are any needed changes by November 25<sup>th</sup>.**  
*Thank you!*



Please continue to be aware of “scammers” that pretend to be Pastor or other church leaders in texts or emails to try to get you to send them money or gift cards.

**PLEASE, DO NOT respond to them. DELETE and BLOCK them if possible!!**

# Youth News & Events

For more information on anything listed here, call or email Jacob at: [Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com](mailto:Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com) or 208-522-5650

## RED LETTER CHALLENGE

YOUTH SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS! RED LETTER CHALLENGE – By now we are all well versed in what the right answer is to just about every children's message: JESUS! However, we also know what it's like to live in this world. To have success and still feel empty, to know the right answers but feel wrong - to long for something more. **Join us for a 40 Day Challenge where we will discover Jesus in a whole new way!** Jesus himself modeled to us what life can look like in this world all while explicitly telling us *HOW* to follow Him! Through the "Red Letters", we'll gain a deeper understanding of the ways of Christ and unveil the life He made us for! Take up the challenge – find fulfillment in "The Red!"

Youth, grades 6<sup>th</sup> ~ 12<sup>th</sup>, are invited to join **The Next Chapter (TNC)** – The *MOMENT*. IS. HERE. The St. John, Hope, & Crown of Life Youth are off and running in a life-changing Year 4 as TNC! Our Theme for 24-25 is "**FOLLOW**" We are embarking on a discipleship journey for Jesus! BE. A. PART. of this special movement as we continue to grow as followers of Christ! *We will be meeting on SUNDAY nights from 5:30-7:30pm! We will meet in November on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, & 19<sup>th</sup>. We are excited to continue our special TNC Youth "AT YOUR PLACE" events! Let us know if you're interested in hosting or sponsoring a meal for a TNC Youth Night! BIG THANKS to the families who have hosted thus far!*



**TNC HIGHSCHOOL FALL RETREAT!** CALLING ALL HIGHSCHOOL TNC YOUTH! Join us for the *FIRST TIME* in hosting our fellow brothers & sisters in Christ throughout S. Idaho for an action-packed weekend filled with Fun, Food, & Faith Growth! Weekends like this remind us of our distinct Lutheran heritage that we all share! We will be spending the weekend at St. John and Hope Lutheran celebrating under our theme, *WHY WORSHIP?* It is a FULL weekend filled with

Fat Cats, Swimming, EXTREME Service Projects, Worship, and so much more! Join us November 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> with Grace and many other local Lutheran churches throughout Idaho for a weekend of *WHY WORSHIP!* Cost for the weekend is \$75, see Jacob to register and for more details!



3<sup>rd</sup> Ella P. 6<sup>th</sup> Bree O. 9<sup>th</sup> Dale G. 14<sup>th</sup> Kamdyn S. 15<sup>th</sup> Faith S.



**Who / what is "The Next Chapter"?** Our group (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) is based off Acts, chapter 29. *Wait*, there are only 28 chapters in Acts?! The book of Acts tasks us with understanding how we can be directed by the Holy Spirit and the role of Jesus' lessons in our lives. God's mission did not end after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Like Peter & Paul, we too are challenged to be a part of *The Next Chapter* of His Church. This doesn't end with chapter 28, it truly is just the beginning!

## Memos from Morgan!

For more information: please contact Morgan ([mepralle.dce@gmail.com](mailto:mepralle.dce@gmail.com) or 208-522-5650)



**Need a Thanksgiving-themed photo?** A photobooth will be available starting Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, after worship for ANYONE to take all the family photos needed for the wonderful holiday season! Whether you want a Thanksgiving selfie or a full-on family picture, stop by and use the booth!

**BINGO/White Elephant Gift Exchange:** Join us on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, for a night of fun from 6pm-8pm! All ages welcome! We will be playing BINGO and doing a white-elephant gift exchange. The BINGO prizes will come from the gift exchange. Please bring a gift \$15 or less (appropriate for all ages) to exchange with the group! There will be a soup supper and awesome fellowship provided! (Hosted by the Friends & Family Night Team)



**TOY-DRIVE:** Do you have toys that are lying around collecting dust or need more attention? If you have any toys that you think would be a blessing to the children of St. John, please drop them off in the spare Sunday School room downstairs on the right. We will give them lots of LOVE!

# September Board of Elders' Minutes

(in order to allow time for minutes to be reviewed for accuracy, the minutes are published with a one-month delay.)

The minutes are not available this month.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

(edited for space)



Scott and Suzanne S. are coordinating a potluck style "Friendsgiving" dinner for St. John members and close friends. The meal will begin at 3pm on Thanksgiving Day. Scott and Suzanne are providing a turkey and a ham. **Please contact Scott S.** (listed in the directory) **if you would like to share this meal with some of your St. John family and friends, and let him know what dish you plan to bring (so we avoid duplicate dishes!).**

Volunteers to help set-up & clear are always very welcome!

## H A P P E N I N G   I N   N O V E M B E R !

- 1<sup>st</sup> Men & Coffee (@ City Bagels)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Daylight Savings Begins  
Fall Voter Meeting  
TNC @ St. John
- 5<sup>th</sup> Election Day! (GO VOTE!)
- 6<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Bible Study
- 8<sup>th</sup> S. Idaho Youth Retreat begins!  
*Hosted!*
- 10<sup>th</sup> S. Idaho Youth Retreat ends
- 12<sup>th</sup> Bunco 6:30pm
- 13<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Bible Study
- 15<sup>th</sup> Dine 2 Donate @ Texas Roadhouse (2535 S. Hitt Rd.)
- 17<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors' Meeting
- 18<sup>th</sup> NEWSLETTER DEADLINE DOUBLE ISSUE
- 19<sup>th</sup> Friends & Family Night:  
White Elephant Bingo
- 20<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Bible Study
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Men & Coffee (@ Moose Ridge)
- 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Day  
"Friendsgiving" meal at St. John in fellowship hall. Meal begins at 3:00pm.  
Please bring your dish for the meal by 2:45pm so we are able to start promptly.

