

**St. John
Lutheran Church**
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
290 7th Street
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
www.stjohnministries.net

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

Pastor

Stephen Weems
pastorstephen83401@gmail.com

**Director of
Christian Education**

Jacob Pralle
Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com

Licensed Lay Deacon

Paul Petersen

St. John Officers

Mike Shirts
Chair, Board of Directors

Todd Mary
Head Elder



Sunday

In-Person Worship
9:30am

9:30am Live-Stream:

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

or:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqfTbbuM5U7-IFB7bMslQaQ>
(click on "LIVE" tab)

Communion every
1st & 3rd 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

Dec. 2025
Jan. 2026

Join in God's Work at St. John

The ministry placement director at Christ College, Concordia University, Irvine, asked me, "Stephen, do you believe you have to go to church?" In a very Lutheran way I answered with something like this: "Salvation-wise, no. We don't have to add to God's saving work for us in Jesus."

I was about to take my very first call to work in a Lutheran school as a newly minted teacher. This kind gentleman said, "That is very true. But, Stephen, I want you to know that every day of worship someone may need you to be there for them."

With so many new worshipers joining us on Sunday at St. John, don't underestimate how far it goes when you take time to introduce yourself and welcome someone. An invite to a lunch shows that you are open to new relationships. Sometimes someone will need prayer or a confidential, caring ear. At times we all need someone to say, "How are things going for you?" When we do that, and really want to know, hearts are encouraged. We live in a very impersonal world, but God fills us with love for one another.

Miss someone? Give them a call. Write a short card and let them know.

"every day of worship someone may need you to be there for them."

Take these steps and others. You will be joining Jesus where he is already at work!



"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" [John 13:34-35]

In Him, Pastor Stephen



Please join us after the Children's Christmas Program on Sunday, December 14th, for a Christmas Luncheon. The meal will be provided. We ask everyone to bring a dessert to share. You are invited to share the joy as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!

October 2025 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.)

October 14, 2025 Attendees: Todd, Bob, Scott, Pastor

Opening Devotion- Every Age Has a Stage- Todd

Minutes September 2, 2025 meeting were approved with revisions. **Pastor's Report-** see next page

Worship Services & Spiritual Life: 1. Reviewed care unit contacts, visits, and visitors at service this past month

New business: 1. Per request from the BOD, established 321 as the number of voting congregational members after review of Church Constitution and Bylaws as well as church records. 2. Reviewed status of Sanctuary remodel and the need for services in basement on the 26th and 2nd. Agreed to allow properties committee to determine placement of pews when finished. 3. Review list of Elder Duties for Sunday service. Tabled discussion until a later date.

Old business: Reviewed the discussions that were had with members who are directly involved with RCCM and draft of letter withdrawing our membership. No change made to prior decision to change membership status in RCCM.

Closing prayer.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

(edited for space)

New women's Bible Study

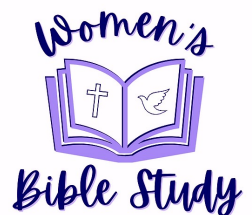
Starts: Wednesday, January 14, 2026. We will meet weekly at 1 p.m. for 60-75 minutes.

Where: at St. John in the upstairs confirmation room

What are we studying?: We will be reading through the four Gospels, starting with the book of Mark. Each week we will read five chapters on our own, then come together to discuss: What did we learn about Jesus in each chapter? What do we want to do in response to that? *Let's start our year reminding ourselves who Jesus is and what he has done for us.*

What do I need to bring?: yourself, your Bible, and something to keep notes in.

Contact Linda H. (listed in the directory, or call the office) to let her know you would like to participate, and / or if you have any questions. Please feel free to invite anyone who would be interested in joining us.



Stewardship

All things are possible with God



Devote Time



Share Talent



Give Treasure



A way of life

October 2025 ~ Pastor's Report

20251014 Pastor's Report to the Board of Elders

Pastor is planning to have a New Member / Refresher Class on Zoom. We will meet 6-7 times using the book, ***Getting to Know Jesus: Using the Six Core Teachings of the Bible to Grow in a Deeper Relationship with Jesus***. This is written by LCMS pastor, Paul Schult. Those who miss a session can watch the recorded meeting. Each participant will have access to an individual meeting with Pastor Stephen for additional conversation. The book includes questions and discussion for each session.

Sunday Study focused on the Image of God—Jim W. and Carey G. have begun a deep study on the Image of God that God created man and women in! Session one saw healthy attendance and great questions from participants.

Rededication of Good Shepherd Mural with Fielding Memorial Cemetery along with First Lutheran went very well. There were about a dozen participants from each church.

UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS:

Oct 26 Worship in the Fellowship Hall / Reformation Day Observed

Nov 2 Worship in the Fellowship Hall / All Saints Day

Nov. 27 Thanksgiving Day / Thanksgiving Day meal at 3:00pm

Nov. 30 First Sunday of Advent

Dec. 3, 10, 17 Advent Family-Friendly Dinner and Worship Wednesdays

June 22-26, 2026 Vacation Bible School



Since the Social Ministry Team is hosting Christmas dinner after the Children's program, we will not hold a potluck in December. Join us January 25th, for our next fellowship meal! If your last name begins with A-H, please bring a side dish or salad; I-Q, please bring a main dish or casserole; R-Z, please bring a dessert. Join us for this time of fellowship! Those who can stay a few minutes after the potluck to assist with clean-up will be very appreciated. Many hands make light work!! Thank you.

October 2025 ~ DCE Report

October 14th, 2025

Sunday Educational Ministries: a) Children's Sunday School (w/ Morgan) b) New Bible Adult/S.S. Parallel Class!!! c) New Nursery S.S. Class w/ our New Nursery Attendant – Brandy P. d) Post-Confirmation Age Youth Bible Study *NEW Teachers!* – Carolyn P. & Beth O. "ONE OF A KIND!" You have a unique mission that God has given you that only you can live out! Dare to be "One of a Kind!" e) Adult Bible Study: NEW: The Image of God led by Jim W. & Carey G. **Youth:** THE NEXT CHAPTER (TNC) Youth Group. We will be meeting in Oct. on the 6th, 13th, & 20th. TNC Flash Servant Event X I.F. Community Food Basket! - Continues to be impactful for our youth to see their service having a big impact for folks with food insecurities throughout our community! Next Event: Sunday, Nov. 30th. S. Idaho High School Fall Retreat is coming up FAST! – Dare 2 Share: The Shocking Truth of Your Story. Friendship Celebration Lutheran Church - we will be there Oct. 31st – Nov. 2nd!

Young Adults: No Host Brunch! Next No Host: November 9th @ Dixie's Diner (Channing Way) **Friends & Family Nights:** Our annual Fall-Halloween themed evening of Friends & Family Night returns! We will be carving pumpkins on Tuesday, Oct. 28th from 6:00-8:00.



Serve
ONE
ANOTHER
IN
love
GALATIANS 5:13

Coffee & Conversation

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 need individuals to serve as a host each week. Please sign-up 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 sheet is located on the counter where coffee is served.

Treats are optional, and can be homemade or purchased. Thank you!

Hosted!

Hosted will not be held in December.
Join us January 9th, at 6:30pm. We meet at
City Bagels. (369 Shoup Ave.)



Bunco will be held
Tuesday, Dec. 16th &
Tuesday, Jan. 20th
at 6:30pm.

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



Young Adult Fellowship

Young adults (single, married, all are welcome!) are invited to join us each month for
"No-Host Brunch".

Child care is available!!

Join us December 7th, at
12:30. We will meet
at Black Bear Diner
on 17th Street.



Youth News & Events

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

ANXIETY & STRESS

YOUTH SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS: Anxiety & Stress In December, we will finish our study on Anxiety & Stress, and in January we will begin "Clean Slate" When we think New Year we often think of New Year's Resolutions! However, we don't have to wait for a New Year for a fresh-start with God! Join your fellow TNC Youth in this 5-week study as we clear our consciences to accept God's forgiveness for our short-comings, and charge into a New Year freed to serve God and love others!

Youth entering grades 6th - 12th, are invited to join The Next Chapter (TNC) –The St. John, Hope, & Crown of Life Youth are diving into a life-changing Year 5 as The Next Chapter!!! Join us this year as we raise the banner of our NEW Theme – "Tell the Story!" Paul tells us how we are "letters from Christ...written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God on tablets of human hearts!" (2 Corinthians 3:3) We can't wait to harness the power of OUR stories by bringing hearts together to grow further in our faith in Jesus! We are on our School Year Schedule and will debut our **new weekly meeting time in January!** We will be meeting in December on the 1st, 8th, & 15th and on **THURSDAYS** in January on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, & 29th

We are excited to continue our 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!



Lutheran Outdoor Ministries

JUNIOR HIGH SNOWJAM @ Camp Perkins! - What on earth could there be to do at Camp Perkins in the middle of winter? How does tubing, broomball on the frozen lake, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, bonding with friends, and an amazing time with Jesus sound?! This what to expect of Camp Perkins – Winter style! We'll be shuttled over the snow two miles into camp in a fully equipped van with tracks and skis. Spend our time worshipping, studying God's Word, sitting by a warm fire, and playing in the snow! We will be bringing youth, 6th-9th grade, for this weekend getaway on January 23rd-25th! Registration is now open until January 2nd. If interested, and for more details, contact Jacob



Who / what is "The Next Chapter"? Our group (6th-12th 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!

Thank you to all who contribute to "1st Sunday Food Offering". Many in our area struggle to feed their families.

Always high-need items:

Cereal, canned pasta, peanut butter, chili, canned stew, canned tuna or chicken, canned vegetables and ***monetary donations!

Generic brands are welcome.

****Since donations have been lower and the number of patrons needing help have 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



HAPPENING IN DECEMBER

- 1st - TNC Youth Night – **St. John**
- 2nd - Board of Elder's Mtg
- 3rd – Advent Service #1
- 4th – Advent by Candlelight
- 7th – No Host Brunch @ **Black Bear Diner**
- 8th – TNC Youth Night – **HOPE**
- 10th – Advent Service #2
- 14th – S.S. Christmas Program and Christmas Brunch
- 15th - TNC Youth Night – **St. John**
- 16th – BUNCO!
- 17th – Advent Service #3
- 21st – Board of Directors Mtg.
- 22nd - **NO TNC YOUTH – Christmas Break!**
- 24th – Christmas Eve Worship
- 25th— *Merry Christmas!!* (no service)
- 29th – **NO TNC YOUTH – Christmas Break!**



HAPPENING IN JANUARY

- 8th – TNC Youth Night – **St. John**
- 9th - *HOSTED!*
- 13th – Board of Elders Mtg
- 15th – TNC Youth Night – **HOPE**
- 18th – Board of Directors Mtg
- 19th – Newsletter Deadline!
- 20th – BUNCO!
- 22nd - TNC Youth Night – **St. John**
- 23rd–25th – Junior High SnowJam @ Camp Perkins
- 25th – Sunday Potluck
- 29th - TNC Youth Night – **HOPE**



Memos from Morgan!

For more information: please contact Morgan

(mepralle.dce@gmail.com or 208-522-5650)



St. John Sunday School Christmas Program

Come join us on Sunday, December 14th, as the children of St. John remind us of the greatest gift during this beautiful Christmas season. This will be held during our regular service time and is directed by our very own Abby S. Christmas brunch will follow. Please bring a dessert to share!!

Help us PROMOTE our events!

As you all know (or most know), we have a Facebook page under the tag 'St. John Lutheran - Idaho Falls' and also our other page known as 'StJohn Lutheran'. If you are not currently, please follow our page! On these pages, we promote certain events so that we can have the community join us. Please help us spread the word by "sharing" these posts on your personal pages along with "liking", as it will push out our posts further. Thank you!



St John Lutheran Church - Idaho Falls



StJohn Lutheran

October 2025 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.)

October 19, 2025 In Attendance: Pastor Stephen, Jacob P., Mike S., Lee M., Bob B., Penny S., Lynn W., Sandy T., Jim W. and Jason S.

1. Meeting called to order. Meeting opened with prayer by Mike.

2. Approval of September Minutes; Motion to approve by Sandy, second by Lee. Motion carried, minutes approved as read.

3. Committee Reports:

Pastor's Report: See page 3 of newsletter

DCE Report: See page 3 of newsletter

Elder's Report

- Bob reported that after reviewing the changes proposed to the by-laws, the elders recommended not approving the changes. Mike added that we are required to present the changes as indicated to the congregation for a vote. He will explain the proposed changes before calling for the vote. Bob said at the congregational meeting he will make a motion to have the proposed changes voted separately.
- The Elders have made that decision for St. John to rescind our participation in Regional Council. The Elders feel that due to the Council becoming an Interfaith organization, we are withdrawing. We may still choose to participate within the small groups of the organization. A letter of our choice to rescind has not yet been sent to the Council. *(continued on next page)*

Properties Report

- Mark indicated that the carpet installation upstairs will begin this week, the bibles and hymnals being removed today. Church services will be held in the Fellowship Hall until the project is completed. Carpeting of the downstairs Fellowship Hall is planned for mid January, after the holidays.
- Discussion on the boiler unit - Mark said the boiler is running and Jeff has been working on this project. A new motor is scheduled to be installed and the boiler should be expected to run for another 15 or 20 years.

Treasurer's Report (see page 2)

- Penny reported that with the hiring of Brandy for the nursery each Sunday, the \$800 budgeted for this position will be depleted by probably March. It was noted that there are additional funds in "Morgan's/Pastor's Fund" budgeted to cover the additional expense through the fiscal year. This expense should be addressed in the new budget.
- If anyone is using the church Venmo account for sales, be sure to indicate in the comments what the charge is for. The QR code can be obtained from the office for event sales.
- The amount of \$10,000 has been moved from the Thrivent account to cover expenses.
- Penny indicated that last month's offerings are less than our budget requires, but that this varies each month.
- Jacob reported that with all monies coming in for the National Youth Convention, there is now \$203.50 remaining in the account. Inoperable cards have not yet been replaced.
- It was noted that there are funds available to pay for the new furnace to be installed in the Hope House.

Social Ministries

- Last months' potluck was very well attended and the October potluck is scheduled for next Sunday, Oct. 26th.
- Advent by Candlelight is scheduled for Dec. 4th at St. John. Tickets will go on sale the first Sunday in Nov.
- Both Lynn and Sandy will be gone for the Voter Meeting in November and unable to arrange the luncheon.

4. Old Business

Bylaw Changes - Changes to the bylaws must be presented to the congregation as shown two weeks prior to the Congregational Meeting. In order for the bylaw to remain unchanged as the Elders recommended, the proposed revision must not pass with majority. Mike will meet with Beth to provide clear explanations of the proposed changes to the congregation, those in attendance and the voting membership. These need to be presented by November 2nd to meet the 2-week requirement. Mike will email the board these changes by next week.

Hope House - The furnace is currently working but is over 40 years and should maybe be replaced. The two bids Jim received are \$5,300 from First Call Jewel and \$6,700 from Conan Heating & Air Conditioning. The unit from Jewel is new but has been in stock for quite some time thus allowing them to give us a better price. It still has the full warranty. After discussion on replacing the unit now or waiting, Mark made a motion for First Call Jewel to replace the unit now before it becomes a necessity. Motion seconded by Lee. Motion passed. Jim noted that a new guest has moved into the Hope House.

IT Professional Position - Jacob recommended that we revisit this position at the next fiscal budget.

5. New Business:

Approval of the Property Use Form for the Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner to be held in the Fellowship Hall. This event had previously been approved by email.

Request was made by a member to use the church for a rock band practice on any available evening. After discussion, the board was concerned the sound might disturb neighbors and decided to decline the request.

Preparation of the agenda for the Congregational Meeting. Mike will post the meeting announcement.

Discussion on who approves the Property and Facility Single Use Requests. These requests will still be presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

6. Next Meeting - November 16th

7. Closing - Motion made by Sandy to adjourn the meeting. Second by Lee. Motion Carried. Meeting Adjourned