

ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN CHURCH
~LCMS~
290 7TH STREET
IDAHO FALLS, ID 83401
WWW.STJOHNMINISTRIES.NET

OFFICE HOURS:
MONDAY 11:00AM - 2:00PM
TUES-THURS. 9:00AM-3:00PM

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DEACON
PAUL PETERSEN

ST. JOHN OFFICERS
SANDY TAYLOR
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TODD MARY
HEAD ELDER

SUNDAY
IN-PERSON WORSHIP
9:30AM

9:30AM LIVE-STREAM:
[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
STJOHNIDAHOFALLS](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnidahofalls)

OR:
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/
CHANNEL/UCQFTBBUM5U7-
LFB7BMSLQAQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQFTBBUM5U7-LFB7BMSLQAQ)
(CLICK ON "LIVE" TAB)

COMMUNION EVERY
1ST & 3RD SUNDAY

10:30AM - FELLOWSHIP

10:45AM
• SUNDAY SCHOOL
• CONFIRMATION
• YOUTH STUDY
• ADULT BIBLE CLASS
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WEDNESDAY
BIBLE STUDY - 10:00AM

The Gospel Gazette

September 2026

GOOD ENOUGH IS NEITHER

It is Monday morning and I was planning to get a used set of tires for my truck because it has high mileage and will only be used for short trips across town. However, quality tires that are resold after others replace them to get specialty rims and tire upgrades for style were completely out. There were many stacks available when I inquired months ago. I guess others have a vehicle like mine that just needs basic parts to keep it going well.

Most of us do not like the idea of shelling out good money for tires yet we look forward to a safer, smoother ride when they are installed. I was thinking of this while driving over this morning. My truck will still have typical issues and idiosyncrasies that other high-mileage cars and trucks do. This will not be a transformation, but it will allow the vehicle to carry on for many more miles.

When we think about our souls and our spiritual life, it is tempting to think that if God just does what it takes for me to keep going, that will be good enough. Maybe I need a relationship to be restored, a conscience to calm or just a life alignment to provide a jumpstart. People come to Jesus when their lives begin to backfire, hesitate and stall or are broken down along the road. We just want to get back on the road like we once were.

God can help with that without doubt. However, God does not just patch us up with a jumpstart, a tune up or new tires. He loves us too much to help us limp along with that which will not carry us down the road and onto a road that will never end. Good enough for the soul and our relationship with God is neither good nor enough. So God does so much more.

Hear the Apostle Paul's words with fresh ears: *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved* (Ephesians 2:4-5). A dead person does not contribute well to the condition of the soul or a right relationship with God. Dead is, well, dead.

So God takes action.

Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak often about new life in Christ Jesus our Lord. *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life* (Romans 6:4). We have not been given a bandaid fix or even an expensive upgrade. We have been given a completely new and flawless gift. *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me* (Galatians 2:20).

Take some time to meditate on that idea. Your new life is a life in which Jesus your risen Savior lives in you! Consider the implications of that in daily life. Jesus said, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit* (John 3:6). So God got busy and did for you and me what we could never do for ourselves.

Here is what He has done! *If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself* (2 Corinthians 5:17-18).

Postscript: The truck now rides so well!!! What a difference.

Take that NEW LIFE in Christ & LIVE it!

In His Mercy,

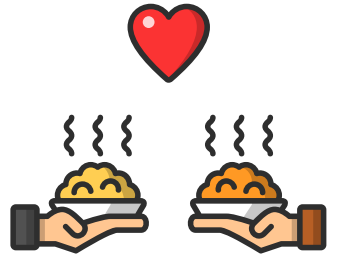
Pastor Stephen



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!

It's time for a potluck!! The next potluck will be held on Sunday, September 27th. If your last name begins with A-H, please bring a dessert. I-Q, please bring an appetizer, salad, or side dish. R-Z, please bring a casserole or main dish. If you have food sensitivities, just bring a meal for yourself that you are able to enjoy. Please join us for this time of fellowship!



Please join us on Wednesday, Sept. 9th at 1pm to study the Bible. We will start this fall with the book of Acts. All you need is your Bible and a notepad. Prior to our first meeting, please read the first five chapters of Acts. Let Linda H. (in the directory or call the office) know if you are able to join us, or if you have any questions.

St. John is holding a garage sale!!

We would love any and all of your unwanted gently used items. We are accepting donations through September 10th! We are also searching for people to help set up & work the garage sale. The sale will be held September 10th-12th. All money raised will go to replenish funds used for the plumbing repairs recently completed at St. John.



Join us September 19th for
Dinner as well as a Silent
& Dessert Auction!

This event will be held at Pearl Hall.

We are looking for donations for the Silent Auction as well as your most decadent dessert, and of course volunteers to help! Most importantly, we ask that you plan to attend and support this fundraising event. For questions or to volunteer, please contact Lynn W. (contact information in your directory, or call the office)



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



Join us on Friday, September 11th
at 6:30pm for an adult evening of
fellowship at City Bagels.

(369 Shoup Ave.)

Invite friends and bring an appetizer
/ dessert to share. Beverages will be
provided. Hope to see you there!



Bunco!!

Bunco will not be held in
September. Plan on getting
together in October!



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!!

Due to Labor Day and Rally Day,
No-Host Brunch will not be held in
September. Plan to join us in October.

**Morgan's
Memos**



ALL FAMILIES & KIDS! JOIN US FOR RALLY DAY 2026!

Can you believe it? The new school year has started!
We are ready to start a new academic year at St. John!
Join us on Sunday, September 13, to kick off the new
school year with some fun bouncin', treats, and
fellowship with one another.

If able, please bring a treat that is special
to your family, to share with all!

Contact Jacob or Morgan with any questions.

Rooted & Raising St. John Moms' Group!

Calling all moms of St. John and our
community! We are starting up a
new group at St. John for all TYPES
of moms with kids at ANY stage! This
will be a time for us to gather for
coffee, community, and
conversation. Kids are always
welcome. Do you have a mom friend
that doesn't attend St. John? Please
invite them! Let's help this group
grow into something special.

Meetings will be bi-monthly.

Our first meeting is on Tuesday,
September 29th @ 10am.

Message Morgan for information
or any questions.



Pastor's Report July 2026

- Baptisms: Pastor will sit down with a family regarding baptism
- Sunday Study— Our Study of James has brought great conversations.
- Men & Coffee is set to meet on July 17 / July 24 / July 31
- Hosted late Spring and Early Summer attendance has been very good.
- Laurie and Stephen are so glad to be settling in their new home.
- Vision Bridge meetings to expand the team have been going well. Feedback is that many would be more apt to be available for future planning as children get back to school. 1 New Attender in Discipleship with Pastor & Jacob
- Home visits are going well. A regular time has been established with Sylvia P. and Wilma T. is doing well after her 95th birthday. Hans D. will be served this Thursday.
- Funerals— Grace B's service was held at Buck Murphy with an Interment the day after at Fielding Memorial Cemetery.
- The 10 a.m. Wednesday study has had very good attendance and excellent conversations in the series, "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School".
- Vacation Bible School was really successful. A great take away was the deepening of relationships of the many, many St. John Volunteers.
- Soon after Rally Sunday we will get a New Member Sunday set and a Recognition of Board Members.
- Kory Walstad was ordained and installed to serve Crown of Life Lutheran Church, Rigby, ID, as their pastor. There was a strong turnout for the service and celebration. Several St. John members were in attendance. District President, Rev. Dr. Michael Von Behren officiated.

Board of Elders' Meeting Minutes

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

July 14, 2026 6:30pm

1. Opening Devotion by Pastor Stephen. "Prisoners of Hope" by Dr. Kari Vo
2. Attendees: Todd, Dan, Scott, Jeff, Bob, Pastor, and Jacob
3. May 11, 2026 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.
4. Dan and Todd led a review of the Church Campout that was held August 9th-12th. A great time for the families attending. Ideas to encourage better attendance next year were discussed.
5. Pastor's Report- Pastor updated the elders on his activities since the last meeting. Discussions in progress on baptism of a newer member. Pastor represented St. John at the ordination of Pastor Kory Walstad at Crown of Life Lutheran Church in Rigby.
6. DCE Jacob updated the elders on his activities. VBS was a huge success in serving both St John and community children. Thankful for the many Volunteer Servant Leaders who were a blessing in making this a successful outreach. Other youth activities were also reviewed.

Worship Services and Spiritual Life:

1. Reviewed care unit member needs and visits.
2. Reviewed recent visitors and potential members for contact needs.

New business: 1. 2026-2027 Elder Goals and old business items were discussed and decisions made for followup. Items of focus include completing the old business items listed below.

Old business:

1. Review List of elder Duties. Next step, work on AV procedures- Dan
2. Men's Quarterly Gatherings- Scott will work with Gene W. on coordinating.
3. Status of Vision Bridge- Next steps. Pastor and Jacob have a kick off meeting set for Aug. 29th
4. Assistance for Pastor on shut-in visits/ communion. Pastor provided format for Elder lead visits/ communion.
5. New Member packet review. Decided to keep working to update the information given to new members and how to get new members involved. Pastor is planning a New Member Welcome Sunday soon after Rally Sunday.

Next Meeting- Scheduled Tuesday, August 11th, 6:30pm . Meeting closed with prayer for members and friends in need.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

(edited for space)

YOUTH NEWS



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!

Youth entering grades 6th - 12th, are invited to join The Next Chapter (TNC) –The St. John, Hope, & Crown of Life Youth are about to dig into a faith-deepening Year 6 as The Next Chapter!!! Join us this year as we explore all the depths our NEW Theme – “Roots” Did you know that the greater Idaho Falls area has a combined total of 18 middle and high schools?! Moreso, our community has an additional 15 private and public charter schools. We quite literally are spreading roots all over! Like the apostle Paul, we too are challenged to rally together such a wide ecosystem of believers! “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ROOTED and built up in him!” (Colossians 2:6-7). We can’t wait to see where the Lord will strengthen relationships and grow new ones together through our shared faith in Jesus! We are TRANSITIONING back to our School Year Schedule. We will be meeting on THURSDAY nights from 5:30-7:30! We will meet in September on the 17th & 24th. We are excited to bring back our special TNC Youth “AT YOUR PLACE” events throughout the school year! Let us know if you’re interested in hosting or sponsoring a meal for a TNC Youth Night! A BIG THANK YOU to all the families who have hosted thus far!

YOUTH SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS!

At first glance, the phrase, “I am” doesn’t seem like much more than just a greeting or simple introduction. However, when God spoke to Moses from the flames of the burning bush, he revealed exactly who He IS through the power of His name! Join us for a reboot of this 4-week series as we explore the character of Jesus and how his death and resurrection impacts all of humanity! We are taking an even deeper dive into this title ahead of our 2026 High School Fall Retreat! (REGISTRATION COMING SOON!) As He said, “this is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations” (Exodus 3:15). Come and see how the power of His name still transcends generations and makes an everyday difference!



DINE 2 DONATE NIGHTS COMING THIS FALL!

Join the TNC Youth with Food, Fun, Fellowship and FUNDRAISING! Did you know that food can be a vital contributor to faith formation?! Calling all foodies, we’ve missed our nights out together and are beginning to raise funds for our Highschool youth to attend the upcoming 2028 National Youth Gathering in San Antonio, Texas! In the months ahead, we will continue to hold regular “Dine 2 Donate Nights” where local businesses will support our TNC Youth’s upcoming trip to the NYG!



Special Note: Keep an eye on the D2D Graphic throughout the year as we continue to expand our community partnerships and special event offerings! This year is set to see some big developments in growing our servant hearts throughout our community!

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.)

July 10, 2026

In Attendance: Paul B, Penny S, Mike S, Pastor Stephen, Jacob P, Jason S, Sandy T, Scott S, Carole D. and Lynn W.

Meeting called to order

Meeting called to order by Sandy. Opening prayer by Pastor Stephen

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve June minutes by Mike, second to motion by Penny. Motion carried, minutes approved.

Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report

Penny noted that Beth did a reconciliation. We are currently a bit ahead in the budget, but the accountant has not yet entered in the new budget. The question was raised about getting our information from him on time each month and if we are required to have a yearly audit. The bylaws need to be referred to in regards to concerning a yearly audit. Penny noted that there are some older accounts in Quick Books that they need help on.

Pastor's Report (full report provided)

DCE, Jacob Pralle's Report (full report provided)

Elder's Report (no report)

Properties Report

Paul reported that the sewer line has been repaired by HoleShot and provided us with their bid of \$23,500 for the major repairs that are still necessary. These repairs require the alley to be dug up in order to replace the old pipes which are bursting. The youth room and gift shop will have to be cleared out for entry. Paul said HoleShot is able to start these repairs in two weeks and would like the approval for them to start this project. It was noted that we do not have funds in the budget at this time to cover the cost of repairs. Penny will check this week to see what funds we do have available and the possibilities for how we can cover this cost before scheduling the repairs. Jason mentioned that we should maybe get additional bids.

Social Ministries

The refrigerator has been repaired in the kitchen. Carole will be out of town for the next couple of months and Vicki will be covering for her while she is on vacation.

Next Meeting

August 16, 2026

Closing

Motion made by Carole to adjourn the meeting, second by Mike. Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned. Closing Prayer by Jacob.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

(edited for space)

DCE REPORT JULY 2026

edited for space - full minutes available in office

2026 St. John VBS – READY. SET. GO! **RECAP**

Beyond amazed at how God went before us to create a SPECIAL week of VBS! Incredible work done together serving shoulder to shoulder bringing the good news of Jesus to kiddos in our community! Celebrating many big growth opportunities that arrived this year!

1. 2nd Ever St. John EXCLUSIVELY led VBS! 2. 38 Adult & Youth SERVANT LEADERS! 3. 60 TOTAL KIDS SERVED! – 17 SJLC children + 43 Unaffiliated children = 73.5% Community Engagement! – That is the mission of VBS! 4. Middle School Youth VBS L.I.T. Program! 5. Thematic Snack-Time led by Social Ministries which contributed to our growth goal of pointing to Jesus in every session! 6. Expanded and re-configured nursery/early-childcare class. 7. VBS Family BBQ had record number of families bringing together a fun evening with 120 fellow brothers and sisters in Christ! 8. 1st Year that had MULTIPLE Sessions and vital leadership opportunities created exclusively for YOUTH! * Blessed to partner professionally with Morgan in writing, implementing, and executing another exclusive VBS at St. John!!!

VBS 2027 will once again be held the last full week of June 21st -25th! Please mark your calendar!!