

# The Gospel Gazette

## The Unexpected Ways of God

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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  
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

2 Chronicles 36:22-23 **Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up.'"**

We are told in 2 Chronicles 36:16 that God's often rebellious people "kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD rose against his people, until there was no remedy." What an awful space to be in before Almighty God. Because of this they were forced from the Promised Land and exiled in Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. The king had first killed most of those in Judah, tore down the wall of Jerusalem and destroyed Solomon's Temple.

But God would do the unexpected when many years later Cyrus the Great began to reign and began a new empire that would eventually become the largest empire in history at that time. God "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia." This pagan ruler would declare that God's people in exile were free to return home and rebuild the temple of God in Jerusalem.

God's promise would be fulfilled because God would make a great nation of Abraham, and the Messiah would be born in his line to save all people. The redemptive plan of God was not stopped by the rebellion of his people or the mightiest forces of the day. God changed a powerful man to free his people, people of the promise.

Paul Tripp shares a story of a time he disciplined his son and was leaving his room and said to him, "I am glad we could have this talk." His son responded. "I didn't talk. You did." When Paul asked his son to explain, he told his father that he had come in with judgment and delivered the consequences but he had not been asked to share his own thoughts.

The roles had reversed, and Tripp says he learned from his son that evening to hear out his son, and how he dealt with difficulties and disagreements changed moving on with others, too. Tripp had learned something of the Eighth Commandment given by God.

In the small catechism, Martin Luther writes of the Eighth Commandment: *You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.* What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

In our humanity we are quick to come to another in what we think is righteous judgment. Our face and tone show it, and our minds are quick to condemn and almost fully closed to hearing another side and desiring a favorable resolution in which the relationship is preserved and an issue worked through so that we may work together peacefully again.

The good news is that Jesus, God's one and only Son, gave his life a ransom for our sin. He has risen from the dead and leads us again each day in new ways. He has brought us peace and reconciliation with God, our heavenly Father. And his Spirit works in us to live at peace together.

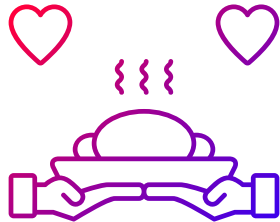
God works in unexpected ways to change our hearts. We may learn from others who God uses in ways we had never considered or anticipated.

Another take away is to never stop interceding in prayer for those we love who are hardened in rebellion or in great need that is beyond them. God can change the hardest heart. God can bring his vast resources and intervene at any time for the good. He invites us to pray. He promises to listen. May our hearts be open to his love so that we may be more and more be open to sharing that love even when it is hard.

In His Grace,  
~ *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!



Enjoy summer! We know many will be traveling and enjoying the great outdoors. Be safe and have lots of fun!

We will resume our potlucks in September!



Church Camp-out!! We will once again be at Fall Creek Campground, in the group site at: Forest Rd 076, Swan Valley (about 45 minutes from Idaho Falls!! AND only a few minutes to square ice cream!!) Everyone plans and brings their own food / meals, but on Saturday evening we gather for a group potluck! Group camping will start Thursday afternoon, July 9<sup>th</sup>, & end Sunday morning (11:00am check-out), July 12<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome. Invite friends and family to camp with us! Cost per family / tent site / RV is \$15 per night. Join us for fun & fellowship!



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Thank you to all who contribute to "1<sup>st</sup> 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!!



**FEED THE  
HUNGRY**

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



Join us Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>,  
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 be held  
Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> 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!!

No Host Brunch will be held Sunday,  
June 14<sup>th</sup>, at 12:30pm. We will meet at  
North Hi-Way Cafe on Yellowstone.

# Morgan's Memos

## READY, SET, GO!

### Vacation Bible School 2026

Calling all children ages K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade (for 2026-2027  
Academic Year) to join us at St. John for a week of  
fun, fellowship, and learning of Jesus! This year VBS  
will be held June 22<sup>nd</sup>- June 26<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm.  
Mark your calendars! 5 DAYS of Music, Bible Time,  
Games, & Crafts!

To make this a great week, we are in NEED of  
volunteers for several positions. Volunteers must be  
6<sup>th</sup> grade (2026-2027 school year) and older to  
assist with VBS for the week. 6<sup>th</sup> Graders will  
automatically be put with an adult class leader as  
they will be LITs (Leaders in Training).

Please consider volunteering as we could use all  
gifts/talents! If interested, please contact myself or  
Jacob Pralle (DCE).

Sign-Up is NOW OPEN on our website (or in person)  
until the week of VBS for children AND volunteers!



### THANK YOU - Sunday School Servant Leaders!

Since the school year has ended as of last month, we  
would like to give a big shout out to all our Sunday  
School Servant Leaders that assisted with anything  
and everything with Sunday School this last year! We  
truly could not have done it without you! Thank you for  
your time, talents, and most importantly, thank you  
for sharing the love of Jesus with the children here at  
St. John!

If it is on your heart to serve this next school year in  
any capacity (2026-2027), please email Morgan Pralle  
at [mepralle.dce@gmail.com](mailto:mepralle.dce@gmail.com)

# April 2026 ~ Pastor's Report

- Baptisms

Baptisms of Isaiah & Noah— March 29

- So glad to have Jacob and Morgan and the girls back with us!!
- A New Member / Refresher Class has begun. We will have two more 4-hour Sessions using the book, Getting to Know Jesus: Using the Six Core Teachings of the Bible to Grow in a Deeper Relationship with Jesus. Written by LCMS pastor, Paul Schult
- Session Three met Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. We will complete our discussions
- Sunday Study— Our Ephesians Study completed
- We have a three-session video and discussion series by Paul Tripp April 26 @ St. John.
- The Yellowstone Circuit Next meets Mar.19 @ Faith, Pocatello
- Men & Coffee is set to meet at Amazing Glaze April 24.
- Hosted met April 10 at City Bagels. About 26 in attendance!
- Weems's moving is going really well.

## UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS:

June 22-26, 2026 VBS

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## 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.)

April 14, 2026

1. Dan led Opening Devotion entitled "Fishermen Don't Fish" by Max Lucado and led the opening prayer.
2. Attendees: Bob, Jacob, Jeff, Paul, Dan, Todd, and Scott (remotely)
3. February minutes were reviewed and approved
4. Pastor was excused from meeting and reporting (Birthday celebration)
5. Jacob thankful for his time away and thankful for the care and support shown by the congregation. Grateful to those who stepped in to continue his ministry during his absence. Updates were given on Children's ministry, Youth bible studies, and Young adults gatherings. VBS entitled "Ready, Set, Go!" is planned for June 22nd-26th. See attached report for details.

### Worship Services and Spiritual Life:

1. Reviewed care unit visits and needs as well as visitor contacts and follow up
2. Reviewed New member class status and participants as well as Elder participation and follow up. Discussed and reviewed the New Member packet that is currently in use. Paul will try to get an additional example from his former church. Elders will review our new member orientation and welcoming.

### New business:

1. Reviewed and approved a new elder candidate for nominations at the May Congregational Meeting. Discussed one additional member to consider and who is best to contact.
2. Discussed elder assistance for Pastor on shut-in visits. Pastor would like the elders to do some of these visits. Reviewed resources to help lead these visits including communion practice.

### Old business:

1. Reviewed list of Elder duties and that we need to add an action item to have the elder review the scripture readings with the AV operator for accuracy.
2. Men's Quarterly Gatherings- Gene W. is considering being the contact person to to lead a committee for this project.
3. Status of Vision Bridge- Would like to have the next phase started by the June church planning meeting.

# YOUTH NEWS



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!*

**Youth entering grades 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>, 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 are excited to continue harnessing the power of OUR stories by bringing hearts together to grow further in our faith in Jesus! Join us as we jump into summer with some special TNC Opportunities “At YOUR Place”! We are TRANSITIONING into our Summer Schedule. We will be meeting at least once a month throughout the summer! (With the strong likelihood of extra special events!) We will meet this month on June 11<sup>th</sup> for a TNC Special Summer Kick-off event!

We are excited to continue our special TNC Youth “AT YOUR PLACE” events throughout the SUMMER AS WELL! Let us know if you’re interested in hosting or sponsoring a meal for a TNC Youth Night! BIG THANK YOU’S to all the families who have hosted thus far! We look forward to seeing you at TNC Youth! See *Jacob* or contact by email for more details!

## YOUTH SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS! YEARLY WRAP UP & TNC CHOICE!

Per our namesake, we recognize that like Peter and Paul, we too are challenged to be a part of *The Next Chapter* of Christ’s Church. Starting up again this summer, we will dig into a variety of topics as we carve out this new era of the church! We will also put a bow on a few of the Bible Studies leftover from this school year! Post-confirmation age Youth will get to explore, challenge, and choose from a wide variety of dilemmas that followers of Christ face in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century! Come eager with your grandest ideas and ready to discover what is in store for *The Next Chapter*!



## VBS VOLUNTEERS – WE NEED YOU!

Are you a TNC Youth with a passion for teaching?! Or maybe you just love cute little kids! We have just the opportunity for you! St. John’s VBS is June 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 26<sup>th</sup>. You will have the opportunity to pair up with the younglings and help teach them about Jesus! We have many needs for a fun week, and there is without a doubt a special spot for you! We’re also excited to launch a new Leader in Training (L.I.T.) program for our in-coming 6<sup>th</sup> graders!

Don’t miss out on this incredible occasion! For more information contact Jacob Pralle. [Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com](mailto:Jcpralle.DCE@gmail.com)

# 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.)

April 19, 2026

In Attendance: Mike S, Todd M, Lee M, Beth O, Pastor Stephen, Sandy T, Gene W, Jason S, Carole H. and Lynn W.

Meeting called to order. Opening prayer by Pastor Stephen.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve February minutes as corrected online. Motion to approve March minutes as corrected by Beth, second to motion by Lee. Motion carried, minutes approved.

**Committee Reports:** Treasurer's Report (provided) Beth reported that due to tax season books have not been reviewed. We have had sufficient donations and we are currently meeting our budgeted items. There is \$2,500 left from garage sale to be used for kitchen remodel. Beth reported that there is an additional \$10,000 from Thrivent dollars has been appropriated to the kitchen remodel.

Pastor's Report (See page 5)

DCE, Jacob Pralle's Report: **1)** Jacob thanked everyone for their love and support through the loss of his mother.

**2)** Commented on the renovation of the nursery and how well it turned out for families in the congregation.

**3)** Next food basket May 31<sup>st</sup>. Announced VBS - "Ready, Set, Go" scheduled the last week in June 22 - 26th. Last year the majority of children attending were not from our congregation and it was an incredible outreach to the community. Hope will be involved in our VBS. **4)** Next potluck is scheduled for September. **5)** April 26 to May 1 Jacob will be gone for a conference. **6)** Age for acolytes is sixth grade. If kids want to train for lighting the candles they should contact Jacob.

Elder's Report: (See page 5)

Properties Report (no report)

Social Ministries: Carole reported that there will not be any potlucks in May through September due to summer vacation. She and Jacob are discussing Social Committee participation to providing snacks for VBS which is funded by VBS budget. Carole will be gone April through June 1<sup>st</sup>. Vickie J. will cover her responsibilities and will provide the luncheon for the voters' meeting. She brought up the responsibilities of the groups using our facility and questioned if we need to review our facility use agreement. Approximately 100 people attended the Easter brunch. Carole felt it was successful.

Old Business: **1)** Budget was reviewed by Beth as to be presented to the congregation. Beth made the motion to accept the budget with the proposed changes. Second by Todd. Motion passed. She will get an updated copy of the budget to the committee. It will be provided to the congregation 2 weeks prior to the Congregational meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>

**2)** Todd made the motion to revise Cheryl's hours in lieu of a raise. Her Monday schedule would be reduced two hours, Monday: 11am to 2pm. Tuesday through Thursday, 8am to 4pm. Motion second by Lee. Motion passed. **3)** Youth Gathering fund raising committee. Jacob requested to put a pause on creating this committee and see where we need to go. Penny will be the lead to track the monies for youth gatherings. Beth reached out to the youth who use their own funds for the convention and they are going to be reimbursed. **4)** Nominations for new board meetings. It was noted that Lee has only missed one meeting in the last 2 years! The board offered special thanks for his dedication to the position. No one has been contacted for any of the positions open. Todd mentioned maybe newer members be approached for the member at large position. Along with Deb K., LaDawn C., Janet B., David or Jennifer L., Derek F. and David A. were suggested. Mike will consider the position of Vice President.

New Business: **1)** Todd said there will be nominations for new a new Elder presented at the voter's meeting and nominations will be asked from the floor. Mike will call for a motion on all positions. **2)** Fellowship Hall use policy. Gene approached the AA group currently using the facility. They had questions about no longer being able to use the nursery and requesting access. Jacob said the nursery is now locked due to damage of items. Lynn mentioned if they have caused damages they need to be approached and take responsibility for those damages. After discussion it was suggested they be allowed to use the classroom next to the youth room - which is currently just being used for storage. Gene has not contacted the NA group but will in the future. Beth made a motion that Gene will meet with the groups to see their needs. Second by Sandy. Motion passed. **3)** Pastor had received a request for an additional group using the building and he answered that we were currently hosting two groups and at this time cannot host another.

Next Meeting: Congregational voters' meeting, May 17, 2026

Closing: Motion made by Sandy to adjourn the meeting. Second by Lee. Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned.

Closing Prayer by Todd.

(Full minutes on file in Church office)

(edited for space)