

The Gospel Gazette

December 2017 / January 2018

St. John Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

290 7th Street
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
www.stjohnministries.net

Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday
9:00am-3:00pm

Phone: (208) 522-5650
office@stjohnministries.net

Pastor

Stephen Weems

St. John Officers

David Bush,
Vice – Chairman,
Board of Directors
Dave Van Haften,
Chairman,
Board of Elders

Worship

9:30am - Sunday

Communion every
1st & 3rd Sunday

10:30am - Fellowship

10:45am -
Sunday School
& Bible Study

Wednesday Bible Study

9:30am

ADVENT SERVICES

Wednesdays,
December 6, 13, & 20
soup supper at 6:00pm

Followed by
service at 7:00pm

Please join us!

**Christmas Eve
Services**

9:30am & 7:00pm

The Ongoing Work of God in Us and For Us

In the November 2017 newsletter, I ended with these words: "God's Word clearly tells us that Jesus' death was ours, and his new forever-life is ours as well. YOU ARE EXONERATED." That is the "now" of God's work in and for us. This time we look at the "not yet" of God's work, the unfolding and ongoing work he tells us he is doing. Romans 8:29 says, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." It is God's intention, now that you are in Christ Jesus, that you grow more and more to live out your faith with the heart and actions of Jesus. And this is not a new plan; God predestined it, he thought it out long ago and today is working in you by his Spirit to make it so. We often want to see God's work of grace completed and done, done right now.

It is easy to lose heart and be deflated spiritually when we still see within ourselves words, actions, attitudes, and desires that are far from God's desire for us as his children. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he speaks to the fact that there were great pressures and hardships placed on him and others who brought Jesus' message to others, but they could be confident and encouraged that God's work was still continuing in and through them in God's strength even when they as God's

servants experienced being brought low. In verse 4:16 he writes, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

God is
Always
at work

Similarly, in Romans 8:10 Paul writes, "But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life

because of righteousness." Paul is directing his readers in Rome and us today to know that God is continuing to pour his Spirit into us and the Spirit is our source of God's righteousness given that we may live with God's actions, words, attitudes, and desires.

God is transforming us. It is his work within us. And because God chooses to let this work unfold within us, we need to trust him for today, and tomorrow, and for everyday he gives us. Is not that the lesson he was teaching his people when he brought them out of bondage in Egypt and journeyed with them for 40 years? He gave them manna and quail each day, but he did not fill their pantry and storage sheds. They would receive what they needed each day. God would also have us find him to be trustworthy in making us more and more like Jesus. He could complete the work all at once, but he chooses to lead daily and hourly by his Spirit. So we can take a deep breath when we get in a rush, and we can rest assured that God will finish in us what he planned long, long ago.

To him be the glory. ~ Pastor Stephen

Stephen Ministry – Do you know someone who is dreading the upcoming holidays?

For many people, the holiday season is a time of joy, gladness, expectation, family gatherings, seasonal festivities, gift-giving and, ultimately, a celebration about the birth of Christ. For others, the season is less pleasant and much darker. To anyone experiencing grief, loneliness, illness, family crises, financial concerns, or any number of other life difficulties, the season can be overwhelming. If you (or someone you know) is reluctantly facing the holidays, you are encouraged to contact a St. John Stephen Minister.

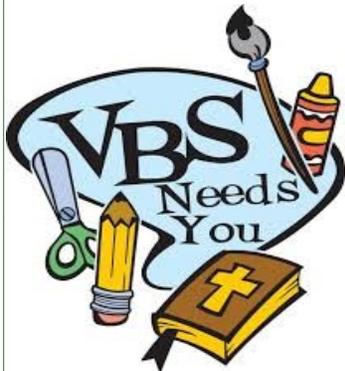


Stephen Ministry is an integral part of the St. John congregation. It is a powerful tool in bringing God into caregiving. It matches caregivers with those who need to receive care. Through Stephen Ministry, Jesus is working in and through Christians to provide care for his people. Currently, St. John has eight trained Stephen Ministers, and three more are in training. If you believe you or someone you know (either inside or outside our congregation) would benefit from the care and compassion of a Stephen Minister, contact Pastor Stephen or either of the Stephen Ministry leaders, Morris H. or Greg H.



We will hold our next potluck luncheons on Tuesday, December 12th and Tuesday, January 9th, at noon. All are welcome. You are invited to bring a dish to share, but if it is difficult to do so, just come and visit.. Bring a friend to enjoy great company and share delicious food!

Save the Date!



It may seem like VBS is a long way off, but it is never too early to begin planning and preparing! **VBS will be held June 25-29, 2018.** Please pray about helping with this vital ministry. Perhaps consider using a day of vacation to help share God's word. For many of the children who attend, this is their *only* exposure to the love of Jesus!

Many helpers make light work.

From Laverne C.,

As I write this to ask to transfer my membership, I think of all of the wonderful friends and family I have had all these 76+ years. I am the third generation of my family to belong to St. John and am the last. I pray new generations of families will gather at St. John to hear the Word of God.

Thanks for letting me be a part of the family. Blessings to all of you, ~ **Laverne C.**

*As you go on your way, may God go with you.
May He go before you to show you the way.
May He go behind you to encourage you,
beside you to befriend you,
above you to watch over you,
within you to give you peace.*

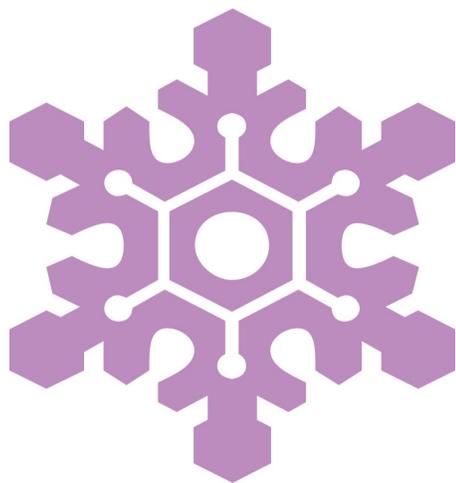


Board of Elders Minutes-October 2017

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

- | Present: Pastor Weems, Todd M. Dave V.
- | Pastor Stephen opened with a devotion and prayer.
- | Pastor's Report: Bible class "Jonah: You Can't Outrun Grace" continues.
- | Sermon series continues through October: "Solus: What Matters Most."
- | Pastor will lead the LWML Zone meeting on Saturday, November 4 at Hope Lutheran Church.
- | Nichelle D. a NW District missionary to Peru, will be visiting St. John on November 5.
- | We continue to review the Shut-in & Homebound ministry, and outreach to non-attending members. Upon her request, we released Laverne C. from her membership. She and her husband now reside in Boise.
- | We transferred Craig, Ben, and Josh H. to Zion LC of Nampa.
- | Pastor noted the Circuit Reformation Celebration on Sunday, October 29.
- | Hope and St. John will share combined Wednesday evening Advent services at St. John.
- | We considered further Elder nominations.
- | Sitting as the St. John Scholarship Committee with Zak and Sarah W., we awarded the St. John Scholarship to Michaela B., who is attending Concordia, St. Paul to become a Director of Christian Education.

(edited for space)



As this year comes to a close, many of you have expressed an interest in year-end giving opportunities. Listed below are several ministries that would welcome your consideration.

- St. John Scholarship Fund - given to a college student pursuing full-time church work at a Concordia or Christian College. Currently, Michaela B. is a scholarship recipient from St. John who is attending Concordia - St. Paul in the DCE program.
- Benevolent Fund - provides funds to individuals within our community who have fallen on difficult times.
- Mission Fund - the Board of Directors has approved monthly sponsorship of Nichelle D. to support her work in Peru. Any additional funds received will be submitted along with our monthly pledge.
- Braille Ministry - help with supplies and postage is always welcome to help get God's word to those who need it desperately.
- Hope House Ministry - to help with ongoing property upkeep, utilities, and general maintenance.

In order to have your contribution credited to your 2017 statement, please have your donation into the Church by Sunday, December 24th. Thank you!

The Regional Council for Christian Ministry (RCCM) encourages you to support a worthy cause.

Thanks to the generous support of food, time, or dollars, so far this year, the Community Food Basket–Idaho Falls has been able to help 9,003 families—a total of 35,573 men, women and children facing food insecurity. The Community Food Basket–Idaho Falls has helped to make sure that 14,941 children in our community did not go to school on an empty stomach or go to bed wondering where their next meal was coming from.

We are launching the 2017 Year-End Campaign. The goal is to help an additional 1,000 families—mothers, fathers, sons and daughters through their particular rough patch. You see, even though we helped over 11,000 people last year, there is still a growing number of Southeast Idaho families that are facing food insecurity. We are seeing an increasing number of “**G.A.P.**” families – **G**randparents **A**s **P**arents (older members of our community on fixed incomes who find themselves having to raise their grandchildren). The United Way conducted a study in our region and found that, while 15% of Idahoans live in poverty, 22% (130,397 households) fall into what they describe as **ALICE**, which stands for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed. These are families who work hard and earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but not enough to afford a basic household budget of housing, child care, food, transportation, and health care. That’s why the goal for this campaign is to raise \$50,000 by December 31st.

Please consider making a special year-end donation of \$50, \$100 or whatever you can afford to help us meet our goal and bring more people a little relief this winter. Your generosity will make a real, lasting impact in the lives of those who are still in need. If you have any questions please contact David Manson, Executive Director of the Community Food Basket - Idaho Falls at 208-709-3773.

Please mail your check to: RCCM for Community Food Basket - Idaho Falls, P. O. Box 2236, Idaho Falls, ID 83403

With gratitude, thank you for your support to our community.



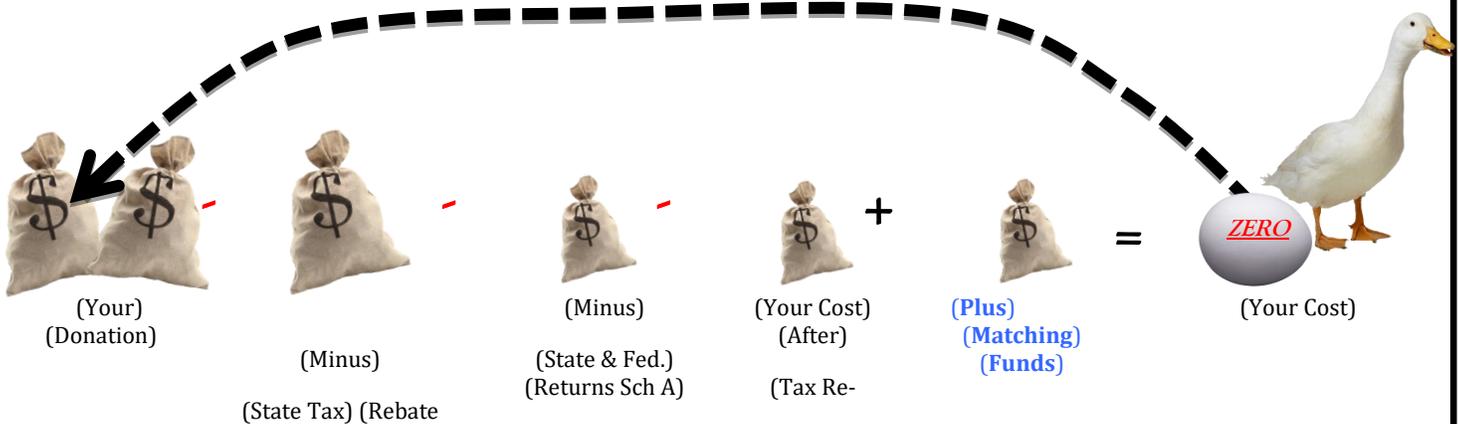
From our friends at Hope Lutheran Church and School

IDAHO EDUCATION TAX CREDIT ~ Please take advantage of the Idaho Education Tax Credit! Donations to Hope Lutheran School qualify for a tax credit of 50% of your donation. This is a reduction in the **actual tax you owe!** If you itemize your taxes, a donation to Hope Lutheran allows income tax deductions on both your state and federal returns, and qualifies for the Idaho education credit. In addition, Hope will be offering a "**matching funds**" incentive, meaning you can lower even further, or **eliminate all together, the out-of-pocket cost of your donation.**

Matching funds availability is limited, so be sure to inquire for more information and take advantage of this opportunity today.

A donation of \$100 will be made to further community outreach programs at St John for each school donation at the state maximum level.

For more information please see the web page at allabouthope.org or pick up a brochure at church. Thanks for your support.



*****Talk to Your Tax Consultant to Determine Your Specific Circumstances**

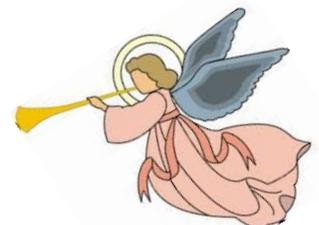
How To Give: (a) by check or (b) electronically - go to allabouthope.org - at the bottom of the home page just click on the "Donate" button.

Next identify:

- **The amount** of "matching funds" you want to off-set your "out-of-pocket" expenses
- **The form of** "matching funds" e.g., SCRIP, or a cashier's check, or both.
- **How you wish to receive** your "matching funds" – mail or personal delivery to your home.

Put this information in an envelope marked "Hope School" and (a) place it in the offering or (b) mail it to the school (2071 12th St. Idaho Falls 83404) or (c) simply talk to an FFG member. When you choose SCRIP please identify the store, the dollar amount and number of gift cards. We appreciate you using SCRIP (store gift cards) because it is another fundraiser for the school. You can use the SCRIP for your Christmas shopping or simply use them as Christmas gifts and skip the shopping hassle. If we don't have your specific SCRIP on hand it will take about two weeks for delivery.

Call 208-529-8080 or e-mail any FFG member with questions, suggestions and contact names of companies or people that you think may be inclined to support the school. Roger H., or Bob H.



Oh Holy Night

Voters' Meeting Minutes - November 2017

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

November 12, 2017

Call to order/Opening Prayer: David B.

Roger H. from Hope Lutheran: Asking for continuing support with Hope Lutheran Schools; Looking for someone to be the liaison between the school and St. John also would ask the person to be part of the fundraising board; Discussion on ways to support Hope-donations, Scrip (gift cards) Program, Auction (Spring 2018)

Committee Reports (Brief)

Adult Education-Bible Study Jonah (Alan M.)

Primary Education (Beth O.)

Human Care (Sheila K.)

Looking to form a committee

Thanksgiving dinner 1:00-3:00 ; Thrivent Action Team- \$250 from Thrivent to help with meal

Sunshine Callers- looking for people to join

Monthly Potluck luncheon at noon

Game night every third Friday of the month

Community Service Program to help with individuals who have court ordered community service; Soup Kitchen

Properties (Paul C.)

Public Relations (Vacant)

Social Ministry (Vicki J.); Luncheon for congregational meeting November 12 is planned; Christmas luncheon Dec. 10, 2017

December 6 is the beginning Advent and the Soup Suppers (6:00) This will be combined with Hope

Youth and Family Life (Zak & Sarah W.); Sr High Saturday Night Alive twice a month; Midweek activities (study night) on the alternate weeks that do not have Saturday Night Alive

Upcoming events that are in the works; Christmas boxes for families in needs; Trolley Ride through festival of lights; Christmas Light scavenger hunt; Finals Care Packages for Former Saturday Night Live members; Always looking for people to help for example there is a need a Sr. High Sunday School Teacher; Michaela B. sends her gratitude for the scholarship and support of the congregation.

The first Jr. High activity and Bible study was a great success with eleven youth participating.

Stewardship (Vacant)

Outreach and Assimilation (Vacant)

Pastor's Report: Letter from neighbor moved by the love and care of church for the community and want to donate to church;

Jr. High had first event was very successful will be looking for ways to reach out into the community; Garage sale; Advent by Candle Light

Elder's Report: No Thanksgiving Eve service; Advent services start December 6 they will take place at St. John with Hope joining ;

No Christmas day service (Christmas Eve normal Sunday worship, and a Christmas Eve service); Missionary, Nichelle

Dykema, to Peru encouraged to support; Concerns: Church Safety and security- needs to be a discussion;

Vacant Leadership offices

Treasurer's Report: Contributions exceed expenses in the month of October; Contributions are however under budgeted amount;

Clarification on church donations towards missions; Request for the board to consider adopting a missionary as a church

Elect delegates for district convention: Convention dates June 21-23 Portland, OR

Dan K. & Stephen W. (George P. is alternate); Due December 21, 2017; Motion made by Dan V. 2nd by Melanie M. Vote passed;

Nominate candidates for district offices will know more after regional meeting in Rigby today.

Volunteer(s) Needed: To fix heat wire on roof by parking lot before it snows; Todd will check with Fred G. & Derek F. about who installed it and follow up with the board; Railing installation for front doors- will be placed in bulletin; Need coffee servers for Sunday Mornings

Move to bring meeting to a close made by David V. 2nd made by Dan V.

Edited for space