



Monthly Newsletter

ANCHORED IN CHRIST
through every season

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS TOGETHER

OCTOBER 2026 VOL. XXXIX No. 10 stjohnnaitkin.org

WHOSE IMAGE DO YOU BEAR?

"Whose likeness and inscription is this?"

Matthew 22:20

The value of money changes. Five dollars cannot buy in 2026 what it could buy in 2000, much less what it purchased several decades ago. Entire currencies that were once exchanged for goods and services have disappeared and are now valuable only to collectors.

Material possessions also lose their value. A VCR was once an expensive piece of modern technology. Today, many people would have difficulty giving one away. A new vehicle begins depreciating almost as soon as it leaves the dealership. Technology becomes obsolete, vehicles rust, clothing wears out, and money loses its purchasing power.

Unfortunately, our sinful world often treats human beings in much the same way. A person's worth is measured by what he can produce, earn, accomplish, or contribute. When someone can no longer work, generate income, or live independently, the world may begin to regard that person as less valuable.

We see this in the way our society sometimes speaks about the elderly, people with disabilities, those with special needs, and children with Down syndrome. We see it especially in the way unborn children are described as unwanted burdens rather than human lives

entrusted to our care. Instead of asking, "Who is this person whom God has given us to love?" our sinful nature asks, "What can this person do for me, and how much will caring for him cost?"

This way of measuring human life is one of the terrible consequences of sin. Sin has corrupted not only what we do but also how we see ourselves and our neighbors. It tempts us to assign value according to usefulness, independence, health, intelligence, popularity, or wealth.

The confusion surrounding human identity provides another example. Some voices within the LGBTQ+ movement teach that a person may have been born in the wrong body. Christians must respond to those experiencing such distress with patience and compassion.



Their suffering should never be mocked or dismissed. At the same time, we cannot affirm the belief that the human body is a mistake. God does not accidentally place a person into the wrong body. Our bodies may suffer from the effects of sin, disease, disability, and death, but being created male or female is not a divine mistake.

Without God, a person may be left wondering whether human existence is merely a cosmic accident. Scripture gives us an entirely different and far more comforting confession: You are not an accident.

David writes in Psalm 139:

*“For You formed my inward parts;
You knitted me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made”*
(Psalm 139:13–14).

Before anyone else knew us, God knew us. Before our parents held us, God was at work forming us. The unborn child is not an object, a possibility, or an inconvenience. That child is a human being known and formed by God.

In Ephesians 1, St. Paul takes us even further into the gracious purposes of God. He tells Christians that God *“chose us in Him before the foundation of the world”* and *“predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ”* (Ephesians 1:4–5). Our salvation in Christ was not an afterthought or an emergency plan devised after humanity fell into sin. Before the foundation of the world, God purposed to save His people in Christ.

Paul therefore repeatedly says that these gifts are ours *“in Him.”* In Christ we have redemption through His blood. In Christ we have the forgiveness of our trespasses. In Christ we have obtained an inheritance. Through the Gospel of Christ, we have been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

We make mistakes. We sin grievously in thought, word, and deed. Sin corrupts us, separates us from God, and brings death. Yet our sin does not prove that our existence was a mistake. God created humanity in His own image, and fallen humanity was so dearly loved that the Son of God took on our human flesh, shed His blood, and died to redeem us.

Our value is not found in what we produce for God. It is revealed in what God has done for us.

This helps us understand Jesus’ words concerning the coin used to pay the Roman tax. When the Pharisees and Herodians attempted to trap Him, Jesus asked them to show Him a denarius.

“Whose likeness and inscription is this?” He asked.

“Caesar’s,” they answered.

Jesus then said, *“Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s”* (Matthew 22:20–21).

The coin bore Caesar's image, and so it could be rendered to Caesar. But you bear the image of God. Money may depreciate. Governments and currencies may disappear. Possessions may become obsolete. Our strength, health, and independence may decline. Nevertheless, human life never becomes worthless.

We may give Caesar his coins and pay the taxes we owe, but we belong to God. He created us. Christ purchased us, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood. The Holy Spirit has called us through the Gospel and sealed us with His promise.

As Christians, we should therefore pray for our leaders and for those who seek public office. We should support laws and leaders who recognize the dignity of every human life—born and unborn, young and old, healthy and disabled. We should resist every attempt to treat people as disposable burdens or biological mistakes.

We must also practice what we confess. It is not enough to speak about the value of life while neglecting the elderly, avoiding people with disabilities, abandoning frightened mothers, or treating struggling neighbors without compassion. Because every neighbor is someone created by God and someone for whom Christ died, Christians are called to receive, defend, serve, and love them.

The world may calculate a person's value according to productivity, usefulness, or cost. God directs us to the cross. There we see the value He has placed upon human life.

You are not a depreciating asset. You are not a cosmic accident. You are not a mistake. You are God's creature, fearfully and wonderfully made. And in Christ, you have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, and an eternal inheritance that can never depreciate, become obsolete, or pass away.

The coin bears Caesar's image. You bear the image of God.

Render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar—and remember that you belong to the Lord.

In peace,

Pastor Ben Hollingshead



JOIN US FOR THE
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
BAZAAR
& BAKE SALE

Craft items, baked goods, canned goods,
garden produce, lefse, Grandma & Grandpa's
Attic, and much more.

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 3**

9 AM to 2 PM

Lunch served all day

Chili or
Chicken Wild
Rice Soup

Vienna Bread
Garlic Bread
Dessert
Beverage



Located behind Aitkin High School at
324 3rd Street NW, Aitkin





St. John's Bazaar & Bake Sale

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3 9:00AM - 2:00PM

INFORMATION SHEET

The big day is just around the corner! Now is the time to put the finishing touches on your projects and get them ready to bring to church.

Don't forget to sign up to help on Saturday, October 3! A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex so we can plan ahead and make sure everything is ready for the big day.

Thank you for helping make this event a success! We can't wait to see what you've been working on!

GRANDMA & GRANDPA'S ATTIC



Winter is Coming... Time for a Fall Purge! Have gently used items around the house that you no longer need? Consider giving them a new home! We're looking for clean, gently used items that are in good, usable condition. Popular items include: Kitchen items, Tools, Fishing gear, Home décor, Seasonal decorations and other treasures people may be looking for!

ATTIC DROP OFF TIMES

Sundays: before/after church

M/W/F: between 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

GO TO BACK DOOR & DROP OFF IN CONFERENCE ROOM

Please do NOT bring: clothing, shoes, electronics, large appliances, or anything chipped, dirty, broken, or otherwise unusable. **Important:** Items that do not sell will be disposed of unless you pick them up by Sunday, October 4, after church.

OTHER DROP OFF INFORMATION

Finished Craft/Build Projects, Produce & Baked Goods

Friday, Oct 2 between 8AM - 3PM

During this time we invite you to bring in your items for the sale.

Please have them priced or give us an idea of their value.

You are also invited to help make some pies and bars or help set up during this time.

You can always help by being a customer at the Bazaar or by coming to eat a tasty lunch. Proceeds go to Kitchen Supplies and General Fund. We hope you consider helping in whatever way you can and let's have some fun together!

ST. JOHN'S BAZAAR & BAKE SALE: As you prepare your baked goods for the St. John's Bazaar & Bake Sale, please label your items with a suggested selling price. The following prices are provided as a helpful guide. Thank you for sharing your time and talents to help make our Bake Sale a success!



PRICE LIST for **BAKED GOODS** (suggested)

Bread: Large Loaf: \$8

(white, rye, cinnamon, wheat, etc.)

Sweet Bread: Large: \$6 Medium: \$4 Small: \$3

(banana, pumpkin, etc.)

Dinner Rolls: One Dozen - \$6

(white, wheat, hamburger, etc.)

Sweet Rolls: 1/2 Dozen: \$8 One Dozen: \$10 8" Round Pan: \$8

Muffins & Doughnuts: 1/2 Dozen: \$6 One Dozen: \$9 Each: \$1

Bars (cut 2"x2"): 1/2 Dozen: \$6

(brownies, Rice Krispies treats, etc.)

Pies: \$12 each for Large / \$5 each for Small

(apple, pumpkin, blueberry, cherry, cream, etc.)

Cookies: 1/2 Dozen: \$4 One Dozen: \$7

Cakes: 8" Round: \$5

Cupcakes: 1/2 Dozen: \$5 Each: \$1

Jam & Jellies: 1/2 Pint: \$6 One Pint: \$8

Salsa: One Pint: \$7 One Quart: \$10

Caramel Corn: One Quart Bag: \$5

Chex Mix: One Quart Bag: \$5

Fudge (cut 1"x1"): Six for: \$5

Lefse (per piece): \$2.50



*Other baked & canned items
are welcome!*



All are invited to a St. John's

FAMILY FUN DAY!

at
Jason & Brittny Wold's House

Hot Dogs provided
(bring a dish to share)

Hot Apple Cider
Pumpkin Painting

Hay Ride
Corn Maze

Corn Hole
Camp Fire

... and much more



Sunday
OCT 11
1 PM - 3 PM



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

YOUTH NEWS



RALLY DAY

Rally Day, held September 13, was a special time to kick off a new Sunday School year and bring children, families, and teachers together to learn about God, grow in faith, and enjoy fellowship. Our kids had a great time playing games, getting their faces painted, spending time together, and getting excited for another year of learning and growing in God's Word!

FOLLOW THE STORY!

This October, we're excited to take our Sunday School families on a journey through four amazing Bible stories! Each week, we'll discover how God was working through His people and preparing the way for His greater plan.

We'll continue with the story of Joseph showing kindness and forgiveness to his brothers, then travel to the moment when Mary receives God's special message about the birth of Jesus. We'll finish the month celebrating the birth of John the Baptist and the special purpose God had for his life.

OCT 04: Joseph is Kind to His Brothers

Genesis 43:1 - 44:1

OCT 11: Joseph Forgives His Brothers

Genesis 44-45

OCT 18: God's Special Message for Mary

Luke 1:26-38

OCT 25: John the Baptist Is Born

Luke 1:5-23, 57-80



Now that you know the stories we'll be exploring, we invite you to continue the conversation at home! Ask your children what they remember from Sunday, read the Bible story together, or talk about how these stories connect to God's love and promises. Even a simple conversation around the dinner table can help these lessons take root.

These stories are more than just lessons on Sunday morning. They are part of God's story, and your family is part of that story, too!

We're excited to learn, grow, and discover God's promises together throughout October. We can't wait to see where the journey takes us!

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

WELCOME BACK TEENS

St. John Active Christian Teens have been off for the summer but are back to regularly meet. We had ten youth attend our kickoff to the new year with grilled hot dogs and root beer floats. We went through introduction, rules, and expectations. Our devotion introduced the Book of Ephesians. We played games of stacking cups, volleyball relay, Bible Book search race, and tag.

We are planning a Gloss-Gospel-Games on Wednesday October 7th at the church at 5pm. We invite adult members to attend with the teens to share the evening together. Our hope is to share time together through different generations. Please come with stories, food, and devotion time together with our church family.

May God bless our year with ACT. Help our teens to have confidence in following Christ. Help our adult leaders to persevere and encourage.

Tony Flerlage

ACT INVITES YOU!

GLOSS • GOSPEL • GAMES



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

ACT youth invite *the adults of our congregation* to join us for a special evening of faith, fun & fellowship!



GLOSS

Choose your favorite polish and let our ACT youth give your nails a fresh coat!



GOSPEL

Join our youth for a short devotion and time together in God's Word.



GAMES

Cards, board games, laughter & a little friendly competition!



Dinner at 5:00 PM

GLOSS • GOSPEL • GAMES to follow

THIS EVENING IS FOR
OUR ACT YOUTH (GRADES 7-12)
AND ADULT MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

PLEASE SIGN UP BY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

so we can plan for dinner and activities.

*Come for dinner.
Come for the games.
Come for the Gospel.
Come for fellowship.
We'd love to have you!*

We can't wait to spend this evening with you!

HOSTED BY ACT - ACTIVE CHRISTIAN TEENS

Faith in Action, Hearts in Service

RECOGNIZING THE LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

On Sunday, October 11, St. John's will recognize the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) during worship and fellowship to give thanks for the many ways this ministry has helped women put their faith into action. A LWML Rally is scheduled in Staples on October 20. Pastor Hollingsead will be speaking. For more information contact Joy Janzen.



At St. John's, our LWML (St. John's Circle) women have faithfully served our congregation and community through a variety of projects and activities. Their work is a reminder that ministry happens in many different ways, and every act of service can make a difference.

Thank you to all of our LWML members, past and present, for your faithfulness, generosity, and willingness to serve!

A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION TO REMEMBER

St. John's celebrated its Centennial on September 13, marking 100 years of God's faithfulness and blessing. It was a beautiful day filled with worship, memories, fellowship, and gratitude for the people who have been part of St. John's story.

We are especially thankful to our Centennial Committee for the countless hours of planning, preparation, and attention to detail that made the celebration possible. We also appreciate everyone who helped prepare the meal, serve, decorate, organize, and take care of the many details throughout the day. A celebration like this truly takes many hands!



Thank you to President Brady Finnern and Pastor David Becker for joining us and sharing in our worship service, and to our choir for blessing us with beautiful music.

Most of all, we give thanks to God for His faithfulness throughout these 100 years. For a century, St. John's has sought to answer Christ's call to be "fishers of men," sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love with others.

As we look back with gratitude, we also look forward with hope and faith, trusting that God will continue to guide St. John's as we share His Word and serve our community for generations to come. Thank you to everyone who helped make this Centennial Celebration a meaningful and memorable day!

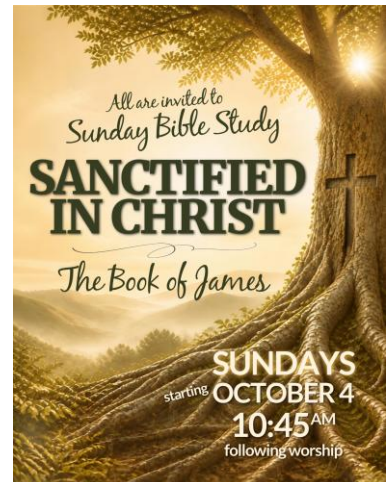
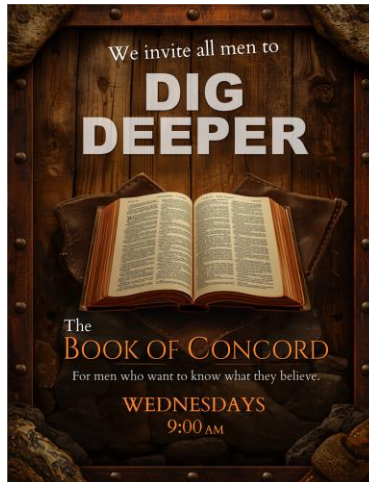
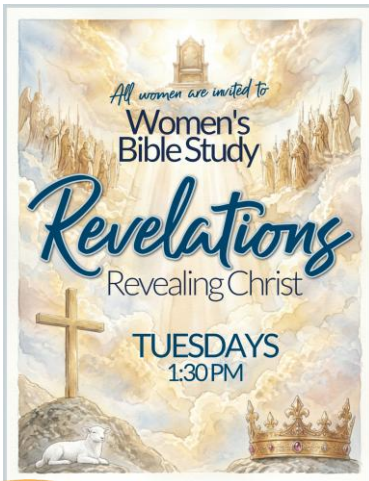
Faith in Action, Hearts in Service

GROW IN THE WORD... JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

Join us as we dive deeper into God's Word and explore what we believe.

Women are studying *Revelation: Revealing Christ*, while **men** are digging deeper into the *Book of Concord*. Beginning **October 4**, our **Sunday Bible Study** will explore the *Book of James* – *Sanctified in Christ*.

There's something for everyone. Come learn, grow, and be strengthened in God's Word!



MANY WAYS TO SERVE AT ST. JOHN'S

There are many simple ways to lend a hand at St. John's, and every volunteer makes a difference!

Communion Preparation & Cleanup: With weekly Communion, we need many volunteers.

- **Fillers:** Prepare Communion
- **Cleaners:** Put everything away after Sunday worship

We're also looking for **Ushers** to help welcome and assist worshipers and help with the offering.

Training is available. If you can help as a Filler, Cleaner, usher, or in more than one area, please contact the office. Thank you for sharing your time and helping serve our church family!



MONTHLY GIVING & 2027 BUDGET

YOUR VOICE MATTERS



As part of our commitment to transparency, we want to share our monthly giving statement with the congregation. This is an important season for our church and one that calls us to be attentive, prayerful, and united as we look ahead.

If you consider St. John's your church home, we encourage you to prayerfully support the ministry through regular giving and prayer. Every contribution helps sustain the work God is doing through our congregation and outreach to our community.

We are deeply thankful for the faithfulness and generosity of this congregation and trust in God's continued provision.

AUGUST 2026 GIVING REPORT

GENERAL FUND

Offerings	\$25,714.50
Other	\$208.89
Improvement Fund	\$305.00
	\$26,228.39

DESIGNATED FUND

ACT	\$42.00
Centennial	\$362.00
Circle (Cookbook Sale)	\$20.00
Endowment Fund Interest	--
Lutheran Island Camperships	\$720.00
Memorial Fund	\$30.00
Mission	\$50.00
Quilting	--
Sunday School/VBS Special Fund	--
Thrivent	\$149.00

TOTAL GIVING

\$27,601.39

GENERAL FUND GIVING COMPARISON TO EXPENSE BUDGET

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Expense Budget	\$23,408.00	\$187,264.00
General Fund Giving	\$26,228.39	\$169,598.12
OVER (UNDER) BUDGET	\$2,820.39	(\$17,665.88)



As we prepare and consider next year's budget, your participation is especially important.

The budget will be presented and voted on at the **OCTOBER VOTERS' MEETING ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25**. We encourage you to attend, learn about the needs and priorities for the coming year, ask questions, and share your thoughts.

Your voice matters, and this is an important opportunity to be part of the decisions that shape the ministry and future of St. John's.

Mark Your Calendar



QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING

Your Voice Matters. Please Plan to Attend!

The Quarterly Voters' Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, October 25, following the 9:00 a.m. service.** All confirmed members, age 19 and older, are invited to attend and are

eligible to become voting members. This is an important opportunity to be part of the decisions that help guide the ministry and future of St. John's. **New officers and leaders will be selected, and next year's budget will be discussed (see insert on positions open).** We'll also look ahead to the coming year, and the opportunities God is placing before our congregation. Your participation matters. **Please plan to attend and have a voice in the future of our church!**

BEING A HERO DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HARD...

You can save up to 3 lives by donating blood!

Red Cross is coming to St. John's

OCTOBER 26 & 27 12 PM - 6 PM

Register at www.redcrossblood.org
Walk-ins may be available

GIVE BLOOD

You can make a difference.



**American
Red Cross**



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Blessings on your special day!

Alyssa Born	01	Ruth Monse	11	Spencer Packer	24
Aidan Lovsness	02	Debbie Schultz	11	Florence Landrus	25
Tammy Packer	04	Evelyn Hamdorf	13	Robert Landrus	25
Kelli Parker	04	Conner Hawkins	13	Allison Anderson	27
Colleen Smith	05	Julie Glanz	17	Daniel Bender	27
Jennifer Cooper	06	Michael Lamke	18	Andrea Gibbons	27
Russ Crowther	09	Zachery Converse	19	Jason Plekkenpol	28
Bryce Haugly	09	Jessica Monse	19	Christian Rom	28
Brea Hamdorf	10	Gretchen Wold	20	Karisa Glanz	31
Garrett Westerlund	10	Jonathon Novotny	24	Taylor Wilke	31



AN INVITATION TO SERVE

Become an officer at St. John's

St. John's has several officer positions open for re-election this fall. These positions are an important part of the life and ministry of our congregation, helping provide leadership, wisdom, and direction as we continue to grow together as a church family.

We encourage members to prayerfully consider whether God may be calling them to serve in one of these roles. Our congregation is blessed when we have leaders who bring a variety of experiences, gifts, and perspectives to the table. Serving alongside one another gives us the opportunity to learn from each other and strengthen St. John's for the future.

Take some time to familiarize yourself with the responsibilities of each position and prayerfully consider serving. Elections will take place at the October Voters' Meeting. If you are interested in running for an office, please contact Pastor Ben or Luke Hamdorf before the meeting. Questions about any of the positions can also be directed to those currently serving in them.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS: each position is up for re-election

CHAIRMAN

- ❖ Chair all meetings of the congregation, the voters' assembly, and the church council
- ❖ Call meetings of the congregation, the voters' assembly, or the church council as regularly scheduled or as necessary
- ❖ Assist the pastor in the administration of the temporal affairs of the congregation
- ❖ Appoint committee members as necessary
- ❖ See that the constitution and bylaws are followed

VICE-CHAIRMAN

- ❖ Perform the duties of the chairman during his absence or inability to serve
- ❖ Help the chairman carry out his duties

RECORDING SECRETARY (This seat will be vacant at time of election))

- ❖ Keep a written record of actions of the voters' assembly and the church council in the form of minutes of these meetings
- ❖ Keep a written record of all standing resolutions
- ❖ Conduct the correspondence of the congregation not otherwise arranged
- ❖ Keep an accurate and current roster of the members of the voters' assembly

TREASURER

- ❖ Receive the rightful and lawful bills to the congregation and make disbursement by check from congregational funds on authority of the congregation
- ❖ Make written quarterly and annual reports to the voters' assembly
- ❖ Submit the financial books of the congregation for audit after the close of the fiscal year

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- ❖ Keep an accurate account of all receipts and deposits
- ❖ Issue offering envelopes, provided by the congregation, to each communicant member
- ❖ Record the contributions of members through the offering envelopes on forms provided by the congregation and distribute them on a periodic basis
- ❖ Make written annual reports to the church council and quarterly reports to the voters' assembly

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: one seat open for re-election / one seat to fill

(Both seats will be vacant at time of election)

- ❖ Be concerned with and responsible for the maintenance and repair of real and personal property of the congregation *(this does NOT mean you are responsible for repairs, but instead contacting someone to repair things as necessary)*
- ❖ Take such action as may be necessary in an emergency to protect the property and interest of the congregation
- ❖ Arrange proper insurance coverage for the congregational properties and make any necessary reports and recommendations to the voters' assembly
- ❖ Regulate the use of all congregational facilities by organizations of the congregation, individual members, and non-member individuals or groups
- ❖ Make proper and adequate arrangements for the housing of the pastor and his family
- ❖ Attend to the business matters of the congregation, including the signing of all legal documents
- ❖ Perform such other duties as assigned by the voters' assembly

BOARD OF DEACONS: one seat open for re-election / one seat to fill

(Both seats will be vacant at time of election)

- ❖ Assist the pastor in all spiritual matters of the congregation, in particular to cultivate peace, harmony and love among the members, to assist in the pastoral care of the sick, the needy, and such as are negligent in worship participation or the use of the Sacraments
- ❖ Ensure that the worship services are conducted decently and in order, that the Gospel is preached in its purity and in accord with sound Lutheran doctrine, and that all instruction, religious or secular, is in accord with the Word of God
- ❖ Make provision for pastoral care and services in the absence, sickness, or disability of the pastor or in times of pastoral vacancy
- ❖ Assist the pastor in the administration of the Sacraments in whatever ways are considered necessary and mutually agreeable
- ❖ Devise and foster ways by which guests and visitors are sincerely welcomed and made to feel at home in the congregation
- ❖ Promote personal witnessing among the members and organize outreach into the community of the congregation
- ❖ Direct and supervise the incorporation of new members and make every effort to bring them into the life and work of the congregation
- ❖ Approve all special services, entertainments, performances, or any other functions planned for presentation to the congregation or general public or to any society or organization
- ❖ Supervise the music staff
- ❖ Supervise the altar guild in the care, use, and maintenance of all items such as communion ware, chancel furnishings, banners, vestments, etc.
- ❖ Consider cases of church discipline and bring them to a satisfactory conclusion or bring them to the attention of the voters' assembly in accordance with Matthew 18
- ❖ Exercise leadership in gathering call lists and calling a new pastor when a vacancy occurs
- ❖ Be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical welfare of the pastor(s) and his family (adequate compensation, housing, free time, vacation, assistance in times of illness) and specifically review these items annually
- ❖ Assist the pastor(s) in processing changes of membership among congregation membership
- ❖ Pray for the pastor(s) and other spiritual leaders and encourage them in their work by word and action
- ❖ Train and supervise the ushers
- ❖ Review and recommend salary changes to the voters' assembly