

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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The Living Word: Sola Scriptura and the Power of God's Word

In a world filled with voices clamoring for authority—from institutions and ideologies to feelings and personal preferences—the Christian Church boldly confesses Sola Scriptura, Scripture alone, as the final authority in all matters of faith and life. This was not a slogan invented out of thin air by the Reformers but a faithful return to what the Church has always believed: that when God speaks, things happen.

From the very beginning, the Word of God is life-giving and powerful. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... And God said, ‘*Let there be light, and there was light*’ (Genesis 1:1,3). God's Word is not empty or powerless. It is not merely informational—it is performative. When God speaks, His Word does what it says. Light comes from darkness, order from chaos, and life from dust.

The same living and active Word is at work in our lives today. Psalm 119 proclaims, “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*” (Psalm 119:105). God's Word doesn't merely point us in the right direction; it carries us, sustains us, humbles us, corrects us, and empowers us to walk in newness of life. In this Word, we encounter the voice of our Shepherd, our Creator, and our Redeemer.

Saint John opens his Gospel echoing Genesis, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made through Him... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*” (John 1:1–3,14). Jesus is the eternal Word made flesh. To listen to Holy Scripture is to listen to Jesus. To reject part of Scripture is not simply to reject an idea—it is to reject the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).

That's why Sola Scriptura is not a dry academic principle, but a confession of living faith. Scripture is the voice of Christ. It is sufficient and complete—not needing to be supplemented by tradition, culture, human reason, or mystical experiences. God has spoken, and He is not silent. From Genesis to Revelation, from the beginning of creation to the last “Amen” of the saints, the Scriptures are God's Word and they endure forever (Revelation 22:18–21).

Yet in our sinful nature, we are tempted to treat Scripture like a buffet—choosing what we like and leaving what makes us uncomfortable. We may delight in passages of comfort but squirm under the weight of God's calls to repentance, His warnings about sin, or His insistence on exclusive truth in a world of relativism. But Scripture is not ours to edit. It is God's Word. It does not conform to us—we are called to conform to it.

Luther understood this well. When standing before Emperor and Church officials at the Diet of Worms in 1521, he famously said, “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason... I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God.” For Luther and all faithful confessors, the Scriptures are not just important—they are everything.

And it was out of that conviction that Martin Luther risked his life to translate the Bible into the language of the people. For the first time in centuries, ordinary Christians could hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Word of God for themselves. Luther knew the power of God's Word to bring faith, comfort troubled consciences, and form godly lives. That's why his translation work was not just a linguistic achievement—it was a pastoral and theological gift that continues to bless the Church to this day.

As we commemorate the Reformation this October, let us give thanks for faithful servants like Luther who held fast to the authority and sufficiency of God's Word. And more importantly, let us recommit ourselves to hearing, reading, and trusting the Scriptures, not as a collection of ancient texts, but as the very voice of our living Savior.

Let us be warned by the words at the close of Revelation: “If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life...” (Revelation 22:19). And let us be comforted by the promise that Christ Himself is the Alpha and the Omega, who is coming soon (Revelation 22:12–13).

Dear brothers and sisters, Sola Scriptura is not a dusty doctrine of the past—it is the living foundation of our faith today. God's Word creates, convicts, comforts, and calls us to live as His redeemed people. Thanks be to God that He has not left us in darkness. His Word is our lamp and our light (Psalm 119:105). May we receive it with joy, trust it with boldness, and live by it daily—until the day we see the Word made flesh face to face.

Pastor Ben Hollingsead

Installation Day

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

It was a great day together, as we welcomed Pastor Ben Hollingsead and family to St. John's Lutheran Church.

We're excited for this next chapter and all the blessings it will bring. Let us walk forward together in faith and love.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at St. John's,

On behalf of my family, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks for the incredible kindness and generosity you have shown us in these first days of our move to Aitkin. From the beautifully remodeled parsonage that so thoughtfully accommodates our family, to the gift cards, meals, and the many warm visits and friendly greetings at church—you have made us feel truly welcomed and at home.

We are especially thankful for all the efforts that went into making my installation service such a meaningful occasion. The choir sang so beautifully, and the hymns and liturgy on the with such grace. The great effort to advertise the service to the circuit and community and prepared the bulletins with such diligence—thank you for your faithful work.

A special word of thanks also to everyone who helped prepare the wonderful meal following the service. The smoked pork chops, potatoes, cooked carrots, and angel food cake were all delicious, and we so appreciated the time, effort, and love that went into serving that meal.

We are also grateful to all who helped put up the beautiful swing set in the backyard of the parsonage. Our children absolutely love it, and it has already brought them so much joy as they begin to feel at home here in Aitkin.

Transitions are often full of challenges, but your care has made ours a joyful and smooth one. We are grateful for the love you have shared with us, which reflects Christ's love so clearly. It is an honor to begin serving among you and alongside you as your pastor, and our family is blessed to now be a part of the St. John's community.

Thank you again for everything you have done to help us settle in so well. We look forward to the years of faith and fellowship we will share together in the Lord.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Ben Hollingsead & Family



**A SPECIAL THANK YOU
FROM THE HOLLINGSEADS**

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 4
9 AM to 2 PM**

Lunch served all day

Chili or
Chicken Wild
Rice Soup
Vienna Bread
Dessert
Beverage



BAKING & SET-UP DAY IS FRIDAY, OCT 3: 8am – 3pm

We will need lots of help, please sign up or just show up

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL BAZAAR & BAKE SALE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4 | 9 am to 2 pm



FALL BAZAAR & BAKE SALE — IT'S ALMOST HERE!

Now is the time to dig a little deeper and finish up those last-minute crafts and baking projects! **Drop off craft items and baked goods, Friday, October 3 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.**

PIE BAKING: As in years past, we'll be baking our famous homemade pies—always a favorite! **We need bakers and helpers for setup. Please sign up on the sheets in the entryway.**

FINISHED PROJECTS, PRODUCE & BAKED GOODS DROP-OFF:

Please drop off these items on Friday, October 3 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please have your items priced or give us an idea of their value. Suggested price sheets for baked goods are available in the Narthex under bulletin board.

GRANDMA & GRANDPA'S ATTIC: Clean out that closet and help stock Grandma & Grandpa's Attic with household treasures that will bring joy to every generation. **Drop off donations now through Friday, October 3.** Office hours are M, W, F from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. Back door will be open.



Your help makes this event a warm and welcoming success for all! Thank you for your continued support and cheerful giving spirit. Money raised at this event will go to help cover the cost of much needed new window treatments in the entry, kitchen and Fellowship Hall. **THANK YOU FOR THE EXTRA EFFORTS TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN!**

FOUR OPPORTUNITIES TO JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

"L" IS FOR LUTHERAN

What does that mean?

All are invited to Adult Bible Study

SUNDAYS
10:30 am



Women
of the Bible

Join us for
Women's Bible Study
Tuesdays at 1:30 pm

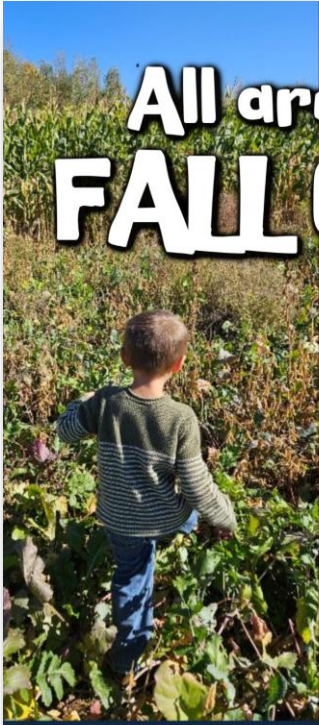
JOIN US FOR
MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
ROMANS
ALIVE IN CHRIST

WEDNESDAYS AT 9:00 AM

We invite Women to
Evening Bible Study

Abigail
Living with the Difficult
People in Your Life

THURSDAY NIGHTS
AT 7:00 PM



All are invited to a **FALL GATHERING**

at Jason & Brittny Wolds

Potluck Lunch

bring a dish to share - sign up in entry

Corn Maze Hay Rides

Pumpkins for Sale

Lots of smiles ...and more

**SUNDAY
OCT 12
12 to 3 PM**

**WE ARE LOCATED AT
39450 Deer Street**



THERE'S A KID INSIDE ALL OF US

You're invited to a Fall Gathering at Jason & Brittny Wold's!

There's no better time than Fall — the leaves are turning, the air is crisp, and flannel is back! So, let's soak it all in together with an afternoon of laughter, connection, and just plain fun.

Get lost (on purpose!) in the corn maze or enjoy a classic hayride. Enjoy good food, and warm fellowship.

Join us for a chance to just be a kid again, no matter your age!

ALL are welcome — young, old, and everyone in between. Bring your sense of adventure, your favorite flannel, and your appetite for joy.



QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING

The Quarterly Voters' Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 26, following the 9:00 am service. All confirmed members, age 19 and older are invited to attend and are eligible to become voting members. **New officers and leaders will be selected, and next year's budget discussed.** Please plan to attend as we discuss the upcoming year.

The Church Council will meet to plan the agenda on Thursday, October 9 at 6:00 pm and the Deacons meeting will follow at 7:00 pm.



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

YOUTH NEWS



RALLY DAY CELEBRATION

We were so excited to welcome back all of our young people as we celebrated the start of a brand-new Sunday School year with joyful songs, fun games, and a delicious lunch! It was such a blessing to see the children laughing, singing and praising Jesus together. Their energy and faith are truly inspiring! Let's make this a great year—one filled with growth, joy, and the amazing love of Jesus shared each day and every day.



ATTENTION CONFIRMATION STUDENTS:

Confirmation classes have begun with Pastor Ben. Our students are full of great questions, allowing for meaningful discussion and understanding of Bible History.

Extra Confirmation Sermon Note Forms are available in the ACT Room, located behind the door. Completed forms should also be turned in at this location.

Pencils are available for use—please return them when you turn in your form, so they are there for the next user. Thank you!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



FAMILY DAY AT WOLDS

12:00 pm: Join us for an afternoon of fall festivities and good food



KIDS SING DURING WORSHIP

8:45 am: meet in the pre-school room wear your red VBS shirts



HAND BELL CHOIR

11:30 am : Looking for young musicians eager to ring bells for Jesus. Parents, connect with Brittny if your child(ren) is/are interested.

CHANGES TO THE LORD'S SUPPER

Beginning in September, members will have the option to receive communion either from the common cup or from individual cups. We will also be discontinuing the use of individual cups for communion wafers; instead, wafers will be offered directly from the chalice. Communion will be offered weekly.



COMMUNION PREPARATION / CLEANUP – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The recent move to weekly offering of Communion increased the need for help preparing for and cleaning up after communion. Please refer to page 34 of the Annual Report for the current schedule.

We currently have two types of roles:

- **Fillers** – Prepare communion on Friday or Saturday, which takes about 30 minutes.
- **Cleaners** – Put everything away after the Sunday service, which takes about 15 minutes.

Some volunteers have served in both roles at different times, and we're grateful for that flexibility. Going forward, to support the increased frequency, we are looking for additional volunteers. Ideally, individuals would serve 4–6 times per year, which means we need 9–13 people for each role.

If you're willing to help as a Filler, a Cleaner, or in both roles, or if you have questions about the new procedures, please contact **Debbie at 218-839-4322**. Training will be available. Thank you for serving in this important ministry!

Important for current volunteers: There have been changes in how communion is now set up. Please review the updated instructions posted in the sanctuary before preparing.

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 27 & 28 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	Debbie Schultz	11	Spencer Packer	24
Aidan Lovsness	02	Evelyn Hamdorf	13	Florence Landrus	25
Tammy Packer	04	Conner Hawkins	13	Robert Landrus	25
Kelli Parker	04	Kendra Gruhlke	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
Ruth Monse	11				

**The birthdays listed are from our church records. Any mistakes are unintentional. Please notify the office of any mistakes, deletions, or if you do not want your birthday listed.*

BRAINERD ZONE LWML RALLY THURSDAY, OCT 23 at 9:30 am

All the women of St. John's are invited to the Brainerd Zone LWML Rally at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in McGregor. The theme will be "Go, and Teach All Nations" (Matthew 28:19-20a) with opening devotion with Pastor Thomson, Bible Study with Pasto Koehler and closing prayer with Pastor Lauterbach. Our special guest speaker will be Candice Bicondoa, Education & Mission at St. Pauls Lutheran Church & School in Perham. The ingathering will be "HOPE" in Aitkin – helping domestic violence.



ARE YOU READY TO GET HELP?

There now is a walk-in Mental Health Urgent Care in Brainerd. Located at 823 Maple Street Brainerd, MN 56401, (218)-454-8001. Northern Pines Mental Health Services have locations in Aitkin, Brainerd, Little Falls, Staples, Wadena, Long Prairie and Walker. Change happens as soon as you decide.

Teri Hiller-Baty



BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER

Become an officer at St. John's

St. John's has several officer positions open for re-election. This is an opportunity to become a leader of our church and to assist in growing St. John's and making us a stronger church family. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the duties of each position and prayerfully consider running. **We will be voting in these positions at the next Voters' Meeting in October. If interested in running for an office please contact, Greta in the office before the October Voters' Meeting.** If you have questions about any of the offices, feel free to reach out to those currently in those positions.

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

- ❖ 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 FINANCE: two seats open for re-election

- ❖ Receive all contributions for the congregation, and see to their prompt deposit in a bank
- ❖ Make weekly written reports to the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and church office of deposits made.

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

- ❖ 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