

Shepherd's Staff

October 2026

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m



REMEMBERING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OCTOBER 31

Source: <https://www.wcatrojans.org/remembering-the-significance-of-october-31/>

Author: Dr. Rob Brown, Head of School, Wesleyan Christian Academy

October 31 is when most of us think of scary costumes, spooky movies, and happily giving out candy to those who ring our doorbells. Without question, Halloween has become part of our American culture, complete with bonfires, trunk or treats and festivals. However, as Halloween arrives this year, let's take a moment to recognize a day of tremendous significance on the Christian calendar this week.

In 1717, the date of October 31 was established as the official Reformation Day Celebration. This was a day set aside to remember what Martin Luther, and so many martyrs before him, sacrificed as they followed their conviction to stand for the accurate teaching of God's word. As Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517, who but God could have known the impact this one man's actions would have on believers more than 500 years later.

One of Luther's most passionate charges against the Catholic Church was that priests would sell "indulgences," or documents that released individuals from having to serve penitence for their sins. Luther and many others before him recognized the consequences of this false teaching of "buying your way into heaven." They knew that our salvation was not received through works, or by penance, but by the immeasurable grace and mercy of Christ alone.

Luther's "protest", and public concerns levied against the Catholic Church began a debate amongst religious scholars at that time and ultimately led to the Protestant Reformation. Out of the Reformation, we received the 5 Solas which are guiding principles in most Protestant and evangelical churches today: Sola Scriptura (by Scripture alone); Solus Christus (by Christ alone); Sola Gratia (by Grace alone); Sola Fide (by Faith alone); and Soli Deo Gloria (by Glory to God alone).

Since October 31, 1717, this day has been set aside on the Christian calendar to reflect on the critical nature of this church history that made us aware of the freedom we have to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus

Christ. So amongst the pumpkins and trick-or-treaters, we encourage you to remember this truth: By God's grace, we do not need a mediator to communicate with God, nor do we have to empty our bank accounts to pay for our sins. We have immediate access to a personal and loving God who created us, loves us and died for us so we can spend all of eternity with Him.

May we celebrate this day, October 31, with great joy and thanksgiving!





10/7 Twila Jansen
10/8 Janet Venenga
10/16 Stacy Ascher
10/23 Ken Mehmen
10/24 Kenneth Kramer



10/15 Ken & Rhonda Meester

Basic Ham and Bean Soup

Hearty ham and bean soup with lots of vegetables and seasonings. This recipe is easy to make and the perfect way to use a leftover ham bone.

Submitted by **J A McConville** -- AllRecipes.com

Prep Time: 15 mins **Cook Time:** 1 hr 30 mins **Additional Time:** 1 hr **Total Time:** 2 hrs 45 mins

Servings: 8

Ingredients

- 8 cups water
- 1 pound dry great northern beans, sorted and rinsed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 ham hock
- 2 cups chopped ham
- ½ teaspoon ground white pepper, or to taste

Directions

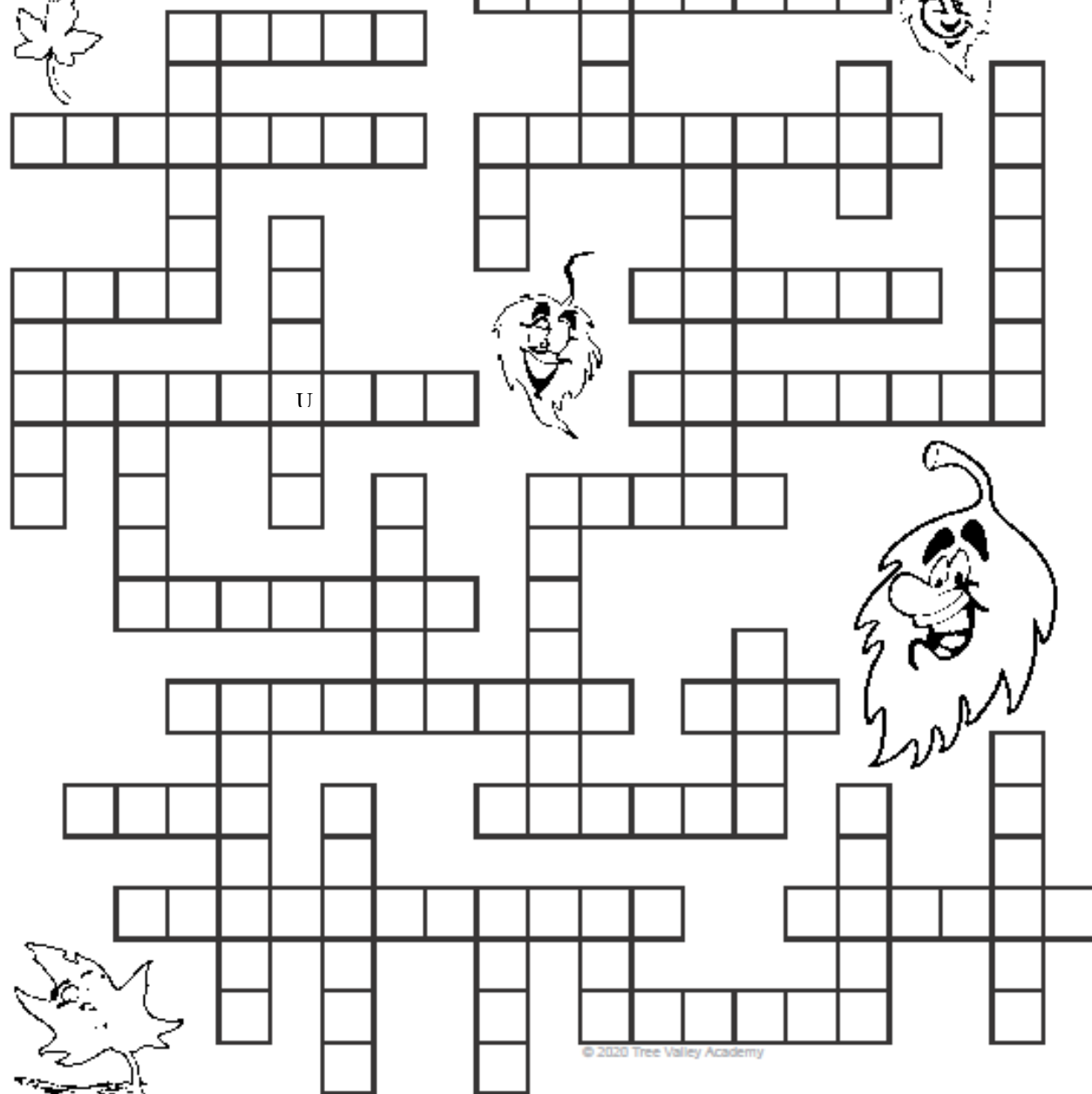
1. Gather all ingredients.
2. Place water and beans in a large pot; bring to a boil over high heat. Stir in salt and remove the pot from heat; cover, and let stand for 1 hour.
3. Add carrots, onion, celery, garlic, mustard, and bay leaves to the pot with beans; stir well. Add ham hock and bring to a boil; reduce heat to low and simmer for 1 hour.
4. Remove ham hock and discard. Stir in chopped ham and simmer until heated through, about 30 minutes. Season with ground white pepper to taste.
5. Serve and enjoy.

Cook's Note

Sometimes I add chopped kale during the last 10 minutes for a pop of color and added flavor.

You can make this soup in a slow cooker on High for 4 to 5 hours or Low for 8 to 10 hours. Remove ham hock and discard. Stir in chopped ham during the last 30 minutes.

AUTUMN



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3 letters

hay
owl
pie
red

4 letters

cool
corn
maze
pear
rake

5 letters

cider
crisp
quilt
socks
spice
trees

6 letters

apples
autumn
colors
leaves
orange
school
season
yellow

7 letters

falling
harvest
pumpkin
sweater

11 letters

wheelbarrow

8 letters

chipmunk
mushroom
orchards
rustling

9 letters

chestnuts
deciduous
pinecones