



St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church

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February 2019 Newsletter

I Need More...FAITHFUL FRIENDS

A friend is someone who knows all about me and likes me anyway. Have you heard that description of a friend? How would you define what a friend is? Are you happy with the friends you have? Do you wish you had more friends or different kinds of friends? That your friendships were healthier or more helpful?

People might define friends in various ways, but one thing is certain. God designed people with a need for friendship. When he created the first man, he offered this observation: "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18). We naturally feel the need that God observed, but faithful friends might be hard to come by.

In the internet world, friends often call each other BFF's—Best Friends Forever. But those same friends often turn on each other and end up more as enemies than as friends. No matter how well someone knows and likes you, there really is no friend who knows all about you. Your innermost secrets remain locked within you, and there are deeper feelings than anyone could ever understand.

God wants you to know what you might have suspected all along. He does know all about you. He observes that you need someone to whom you can pour out your heart, and he is willing to be that one.

But do you want God to be a BFF, when deep down you know what he knows about you? As his own Word says, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1:8). Few of us would make such a claim, but the good news is that God still wants to claim us as friends, despite our shortcomings.

That is why Jesus Christ, God's Son, came into the world long ago. He came to do what only the best of friends would do—he came to lay down his life for you. He came to stand in for you and take whatever punishment God's justice demanded for your sins. And God accepted his own Son's sacrifice to wipe out the guilt of your sin.

That is why God invites you to see him as your best friend. He knows all about you and everything that you need. He extends his love to you without conditions, for the sake of his Son's death on the cross.

You will not find a more faithful friend than God. Look to the living God and learn more about his faithfulness and love. The more you learn, the more you will find that he is a true Friend that you can always trust.

Interested in learning more about the differences between Lutheran church bodies in America? Our library has the paperback *WELS AND OTHER LUTHERANS*. Included are comparisons concerning doctrine, the traditional Lutheran Confessions, fellowship, scouting, military chaplaincy, and more. There is a brief history of each church body and a chart of church mergers in the past. Church bodies researched are LCMS, ELCA, CLC, LCR, AALC, and Lutheran Brethren. Look for it in the black label section (doctrinal).

"Pre" Super Bowl Party Adult Fellowship will be having a "Pre" Super Bowl Party on Sunday, February 3rd beginning at 11:30am. All are welcome. We will start with a potluck. Couple bring a main dish, singles bring a salad or dessert. After we eat, we'll play cards and games. We'll end in time to go home and watch the Super Bowl in your own home. Hope to see you there!

LWMS We have received our new "Befriend a Mission" (BAM) assignments. Our new BAM student is Samuel Doebler, a freshman at Wisconsin Lutheran. His parents are missionaries in East Asia. If you would like to send cards or letters of encouragement to Sam, his address is as follows:
2855 44th St. Milwaukee, WI 53219

Our new BAM missionary is Reverend Bounkeo Lor, the Hmong Asia Ministry Coordinator who was featured in last week's bulletin insert. Rev. Lor is home based in Kansas City but spends much of his time in Vietnam. You may send cards/letters of encouragement to his home address:
4850 Oakland Ave. Kansas City, KS 66102

The Vietnamese government has invited WELS to build a theological training facility in Hanoi. How great it would be for St. Matthew's congregation to support this ministry through prayer and donations. For more information, check out the LWMS bulletin board in the entryway. Please remember both men and their families in your prayers.

Highlights from the Quarterly Voter's Meeting:

- The voters approved council's recommendation to extend Amy Bohme's call for another year and increase her time from .70 to .77. The school will cover half of the cost.
- The voters approved the council's recommendation to allow the school to add another PreK room. This class will run 5 days per week. The school will also be expanding their after-school care before & after school care. This will allow St. Matthew's to connect with more families in the community and share the gospel with more families.
- A lay-delegate volunteer was selected to attend the WELS Synod Convention in February.
- The voters approved council's recommendation to call a part-time, retired pastor. Pastor Gurgel's call ends on June 30, 2019.
- The voters approved the change to the constitution recommended by council to handle membership changes. **Changed from:**

Application for membership in this congregation must be sought by approaching the pastor and officers of the congregation. If they find the applicant to be of the same faith as the congregation and recommend the same for membership and there are no other hindrances, the applicant may be accepted as a member in any legally called meeting of the ~~congregation.~~

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- The voters approved council's recommendation to use the interest from the Endowment Scholarship Fund to provide tuition assistance to any St. Matthew's congregation member that is attending MLC or any other Synod approved Teaching College. The only requirement would be submitting a request for Tuition assistance. The interest amount generated would be based upon the same percentage as the congregation has set for its other funds.
- The Building & Grounds Committee has inspected our roofs and found the roofing over the altar area was in bad shape in some areas and brittle in all areas. The cost to repair and replace the damaged area is \$35,000. The voters approved to start a special fund for this.

Thank You! The Outreach Committee offers heartfelt thanks for the generous response to the Wish Tree cards. Fifty-one individuals were the recipients of these gifts of Christian love. Fifty-one individuals know that God's people care about them.

Women of Faith The area WELS, Women of Faith Bible Study, will meet on Saturday, February 9, 2019, at Goodview-Trinity Church, (820 37th Avenue, Goodview) at 9:00am.

Circle 1 Circle 1 will meet on Thursday, February 14th at Noon at Family Restaurant.

Contribution Statements Contribution statements for 2018 are ready and available for pick up. They are arranged alphabetically behind the last row of pews.

Prayer Partners are wanting to serve you. Request a prayer at SMLCPP@gmail.com or by speaking to the pastors, Susan Gannaway, Joleen Smith, or Barb Gurgel.

Offering Envelopes for 2019 Offering envelopes for 2019 are available for pick up in the church basement. They are arranged alphabetically on the pews in the basement fellowship area.

The Caring Committee at St. Matthew's is available to help members in the following ways: Assist with driving for shopping, doctor appointments, etc. for shut-ins and/or for members temporarily unable to drive.

We can provide a meal for a family or individual when a severe illness strikes. Visit a member in the hospital or long-term care facility during a lengthy illness or recovery period. Contact recent widows or widowers to see how they are doing. Assist/or help schedule work days for cleaning up yard, garage, etc. for elderly or disabled members. To make a request for help (this would be confidential) for yourself or another member please contact Pastor Schoell or Sue Berg (507-454-5265) or e-mail: jberg@hbc.com

100th Anniversary Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 6 at 6:00pm.

Adult Fellowship is sponsoring a trip to the Luther High Play on Sunday March 10th. Carpooling will be available from church leaving at 12:45 with the play starting at 2:00. Tickets must be purchased ahead of time so watch the bulletin for more details and how to reserve a ticket. All are welcome to attend a fun performance.

WELS Women's Ministry conference is coming up this July 18-20, 2019 at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, WI. The theme is Living Stones: Positioned to Thrive and is based on I Peter 2:5: "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house." It will highlight God's design and purpose for the Christian woman in our society today. From openly speaking about Jesus at work or on the college campus, to reaching out in love to another generation, to working with others in God's kingdom, each woman is uniquely and purposefully in that place by God's design. Even when it's difficult. Even when it's lonely. Even when it doesn't make sense. With God's Word, this conference will nurture, encourage and equip you to see how God intends for you to thrive in the unique situation He has placed you in.

- Registration costs: Early Bird is \$130, Regular is \$145
- Lodging costs: Hotel costs are approximately \$100-\$135 per night for 2 queen room + breakfast
- Dorm rooms at Luther Prep = \$47 for both nights of the conference + breakfast

Envelope Enclosed Our church building where we gather together to hear God's Word is a wonderful blessing, and a large responsibility. In order to maintain it and continue the work we do within its walls, some repairs need to be made. It's time to insulate and replace the roof above our altar and finish tuck pointing our bricks. Projects like these are special opportunities for us to glorify God with a thank offering. As we approach our anniversary, it's a great way to respond to all the blessings we've received over the past 100 years. If you'd like to take advantage of this opportunity, you'll find an envelope enclosed.

Membership Changes

In: Shelby and Adam Kammerer (Evan, Avery, Levi, and Lilly) from Trinity, Goodview
Ashley Smith, Tashawn Kreckow, and Malachi Smith, from St John's Lewiston
Forrest Hauser by Profession of Faith
Eloise Shields by Reinstatement

Out: Arv and Janice Trinity Lutheran Church Sierra Vista, AZ
Victoria and Raylyn Lang, Jacob Randall, Daniel Pruka, Kathy Ruhoff by release