



# NEWSLETTER



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## From the Pastor

### *First Impressions At Open Bible Adapted from an article by Dan Reiland*

Your first time guests often decide if they will return within the first ten minutes. Some are more forgiving and will give you a second chance, but most won't. The unchurched look for reasons not to return. Even though they were probably invited by a friend, even friendship can't override a blown first impression.

It's like your first visit to a restaurant. Your first ten minutes usually determines if you will return. Even if your experience "gets better" through the meal, your initial perspective is so skewed that it's difficult to see past those first impressions. The way the hostess greeted you, the way you were escorted to a table, and the way you were treated for the first few minutes largely determines the remainder of the experience. The same is true in your church. Your first impressions absolutely determine if the first time guest returns for a second time.

#### 1) How do you Greet people?

We've all been in a restaurant where it seemed like we were intruding on the hostess's reception area. It's a terrible experience. We wait and

wonder. We check in and are told, "As you can see we are very busy, we'll get to you when we can." How are people greeted at your church? Are your greeters focused in on people as they enter? Do they make people feel like a million bucks or an inconvenience? What do your guests experience in the parking lot – smiles or impatient waving and pointing?

#### 2) How do you Seat people?

That twenty second walk means everything. I've visited restaurants where the hostess walked slowly, made pleasant conversation, and asked if I was happy with the table. I'm already smiling. I've also experienced hostesses who seemed to sprint off, look back impatiently because I stopped to say hi to someone, dropped the menus off at the table and leave.

#### Whenever I see an usher pointing rather than walking a guest to a place to sit, I cringe.

If the visitor knew where to go, they wouldn't need an usher. Especially when a guest is late, they know they are late, so make them feel even more welcomed! You can put them at ease. You can make the difference that inspires them to come back! It's the little things that matter.

#### 3) How do you Treat people?

Whether it's the greeters at the front door, the person serving coffee, or the people sitting at

their table at coffee hour, your guests should know if you care about them.

Treat each guest like they were a king or queen!

Go the second mile. If you don't know the answer to a question, find the answer. Do all you can to make their experience warm, personal and engaging.

Serve with joy. Be real, be yourself, and help each person feel right at home.

## South Atlantic District Convention

June 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>

At the recent District Convention that Dr. Larry Reed and I attended, a new District president was elected. He is Pastor Charles Westra, from Columbia, TN. He will take the place of Pastor John Guse who is retiring from the position. Pastor Guse has been a wonderful district president. He oversaw doctrine and practice in our South Atlantic District for 32 years. A District President helps congregations in the calling process, and watches over the pastors in the district that they continue to preach God's Word in its truth. There are 12 district presidents in the Wisconsin Synod.

While attending the convention, we heard a paper by the President of our Seminary, Paul Wendland. His paper emphasized that in a world that is falling apart, WELS Lutherans still have a critical message to offer. The foundation of our church body remains the words of Luther, "By Faith Alone, By Grace Alone, and By the Scriptures alone". A nationwide Reformation service is being planned for October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at an arena. This will be a once in a

lifetime experience to share with the world what our great heritage means. A new Luther movie will be made available soon that congregations can show to celebrate the Lutheran reformation.

Each year Open Bible gives a CMO, or church mission offering to our Synod. In the year 2016, we are sending \$25,200 as our church mission offering. As a result of our gifts and the gifts of other churches, our church body is opening 8 new missions. They are located in Lehi, Utah; Fredericksburg, Virginia; Coeur d'Alene, and Meridian, Idaho; Atlanta, Georgia (inner city mission); Rockwell, and Victoria, Texas; and Stevens Point, Wisconsin. In our own area, Risen Savior Lutheran in Lakewood Ranch, Florida, received assistance to call a pastor (Caleb Free). Peace Lutheran in Holiday, Florida relocated to Trinity Florida.

2/3 of our world still doesn't know Jesus. Our WELS church body continues to reach out to a world in spiritual darkness. We are presently doing world mission work in 23 countries. We have 41 missionaries, 9 teachers, and 60 lay people involved in world mission work.

What is always special at convention is having time in the evening to meet with people from different churches, to fellowship, and to receive and give encouragement. We are walking together with many others who are carrying out the great commission our Savior has given to us.



## Who's Who at Open Bible

### Russ & Ruth Niermeyer



In this month's Who's Who, I'm keeping it close to home with a few interesting tidbits about my very own parents, Russ

and Ruth Niermeyer. They have been married for 67 years! My dad traveled in his career and so was away a lot but I figure that is still easily more than 22,000 dinners they've eaten together.

What?!? Here's a few stories told around that table when I was growing up:

Mom and Dad met in 1948 at my mom's parents' 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. My grandma told a friend of my dad's to come and invite some other pals so there would be someone for the girls to dance with. My dad and his friends flipped a coin to see if they would go to this party at the Wauwatosa Women's Club or down the street to hear Stan Kenton play.

At some point in the evening my mom was taking gifts out to the car, saw my dad and asked him to help. He always says "And she's been telling me what to do ever since." They started dating (which often consisted of long walks and picnics my mom packed because as I understand it, food and cars were scarce back then) and Mom took Dad to her church. He was raised Congregationalist but went to classes after they were engaged and he became Lutheran.

Mom and Dad were Sunday School teachers at Brookfield Lutheran Church at the same time Chuck Jaeger attended there as a child. It's undetermined whether either of my parents taught young Chuck, but he's turned out pretty

good so we're going to go ahead and take some credit for that.

My parents have always been active in their church wherever they lived, the one I grew up in was Trinity Lutheran in Freistadt, WI. When I was very young they still had a German service at 11:00. Like Open Bible today, there were many programs and groups to be involved in and my favorite memory is my parents both acting in the bi-annual plays held in the school gym.

As founding members of Open Bible I know my parents are so pleased to see how the church has grown over the years. They are still greeters from time to time and Mom is active with the quilting group, but they're happy to "let the younger people take the lead" as they say.

So there you have a few things you didn't know about Russ and Ruth. I'll be reaching out to others at Open Bible for fun stories – please consider sharing with me and your friends via the Who's Who column. If you are brave enough to volunteer, email me at [rniermeyer@harriscomputer.com](mailto:rniermeyer@harriscomputer.com) or just tell my mom. ☺ Till next month!

Submitted by: Ruth Ann Niermeyer

## Small Group Ministry

Most of the small groups are on summer vacation. Activities will begin again in September.

### **Fore-Giving Friday Golfers:**

Every Friday afternoon, a group of "Fore-Giving Golfers" from Open Bible plays on one of The Villages Executive courses. The location varies, but the friendliness does not. If you are a beginner, a hacker or an old duffer, we invite you couples or singles to join us. Sandy Fehlhaber [jim.fehlhaber@gmail.com](mailto:jim.fehlhaber@gmail.com), puts in the request every Monday evening. She will need your ID# and email address.

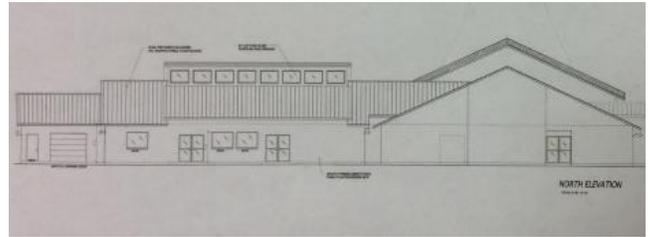
## Snowbird Picnic

All are welcome to the annual snowbird picnic on July 22 at Carol & Jerry Yahn's home in Wisconsin. We'll have a noon potluck lunch followed by cards & games and a fish fry at 5:00 at a local restaurant.

If in the Milwaukee Wisconsin area, we hope you'll join us for an afternoon of fun and laughter. We have extra beds if you'd like to stay overnight. Maps to show the easy access off I894/41 are provided via email. Please email Carol at: [jercaryahn@gmail.com](mailto:jercaryahn@gmail.com)



## Building Expansion Update From Signature



"We have currently completed the structural design for the pitched roof design with windows for additional natural light in the new fellowship hall. This also features a sloped ceiling design inside the fellowship hall to help with the acoustics. Attached you will find the new elevations showing the new roof line and windows. We are also currently working on the Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Design now that we have the structural matters worked out."



## Happy Anniversary



Dave & Nancy Gonia – 2  
Del & Linda Draeger – 6  
Jack & Shirley Miller – 11  
Joe & Paula Malec – 11  
Dick & Barb Chapman – 18  
Dave & Kim Mottl – 20  
Shane & Adrianna Thise – 21  
Dan & Joan Blaho - 22

## Happy Birthday



Genie Selvey – 1  
Craig Marshall – 1  
Diane Brutlag – 2  
Ingeborg Holzmann – 2  
Renda Mackey – 4  
Angela Spengler – 4  
Lois Klatt – 4  
Joanie Musiel – 6  
Sally Stocks – 6  
John Bielefeldt – 13  
Kim Mottl - 27

