



# United *Voice*

BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER | GREENBUSH, MN |  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2022

## Should I meet, call, or type?

*Pastor David Niemela*

No, this is not a new phone plan I am writing about, but rather choosing our mode of communication. I had to consider this again recently, and had to seek guidance which medium was the best in a certain situation. We must admit much of our personal communication has tended toward electronic, and especially in written (a.k.a., typed) communication.

Are we giving out general information, like the time of a meeting or what materials you need to bring to the event? A text (or postcard, or something of the sort) works great. Usually, it doesn't take much discussion or debate (although schedules can get busy, and a discussion can help), and is simply informational. It is important, but there's no significant emotions attached to the subject. Paul said to Timothy, "When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments" (2

Tim. 4:13). Maybe Paul would have sent a text if it were possible at that time, but, either way, this was straightforward information sent in a letter.

Is it more complicated? Does it involve morals, as in you need to correct someone? A call is much more effective, and, even better, an in-person meeting. Do you feel like it will get too emotional? That is exactly the reason to meet in person. Setting aside dangerous situations where emotions could physically harm someone, meeting in person allows you to experience and express a necessary part of being human: emotions. Yes, you might sin in the process. They might sin. The world doesn't have a solution for this, but we as a church do: forgiveness. Matthew 18 says for you to go to the person first, and if it doesn't work, do what is necessary to save their soul. Meet with them

## Church Events

- **Sept. 10 – Men's Group begins**
- **Sept. 14 – Confirmation starts**
- **Sept. 14 – WMF Bible study & business meeting**
- **Sept. 14 – Council meeting**
- **Sept. 18 – Sunday school begins**
- **Sept. 18 – Potluck**
- **Sept. 28 – See You at the Pole**
- **Oct. 4 – Kids' Club begins**
- **Oct. 9 – Underground Church**
- **Oct. 12 – WMF Bible study & business meeting**
- **Oct. 12 – Council meeting**
- **Oct. 16– Potluck**

*Continued page 3*

# WMF News

Angie Truscinski, President

Greetings and Blessings from WMF. Our Bible study continues in Psalms with September being Psalm 98 “Behold Him, Savior of all the Earth” by Wendy Westlake.

Psalm 98 is one of the Enthronement Psalms, which call attention to God’s majesty and His authority over both humans and creations.

In October we will study Psalm 99, “Behold

God, Holy in Power, Justice and Mercy” by Wendy Westlake.

I encourage each of you to attend the WMF Bible study on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m.

This is a time of fellowship and study of God’s Word. I pray that you will take the time to come and study the Word with us.

There will also be short business meetings following each Bible study. We discuss the

missionary reports, review the finances, and prepare any projects that are coming up.

Potluck starts again in September with Esther group serving

*O sing to the Lord a new song,  
For He has done wonderful things  
Psalm 98:1a*

## September 14

Bible study & business meeting  
Leader: Sharon Christianson  
Hostess: Kim Christianson

## October 12

Bible study & business meeting  
Leader: Dawn Baumgartner  
Hostess: Paulette Nelson

# Quilting News

Quilting “season” is soon here.

We have sent quilts to the Alaska Mission, given quilts to Northwest Community Action, given baby quilts to the Roseau Pregnancy Center, and donated quilts to the Trails to Treatment Benefit.

Also, quilts have been given to our graduates, new babies, and newly-weds.

The quilt room has many quilts available for sale.

If you need a gift – please check it out.

## Hudson Lee Waage Baptized!

Hudson Lee Waage, son of Brandon and Shania, was baptized during the June 12 worship service at United Free Lutheran.

His godparents are Cody and Haley Schumann.



# FLY Beyond Reflections

*Wyatt Whitchurch*

The most important thing I learned at FLY Beyond can't be chalked up to one thing but many. From the relationships with fellow believers that you make, to the apologetics that we learned, those were just some of the most important things – but coming out with a strong, closer relationship with God was the best and most important part of it.

The most memorable speaker there was Mr. B. He taught us about apologetics, which is one of my favorite things to learn about. We learned about how each protein in each cell has to be created and with such a complex system of creation there is no room for the proteins to be created my chance.

We also found out our spiritual gifts and mine was mercy, which I wasn't shocked about. I had a feeling it was that for a while, but I love my gift because I can help people with their problems and have a understanding of their problems.

## *Sawyer Strand*

I learned some very important things at FLY Beyond, such as the extent of Jesus' love for me and some of my gifts God has given me to serve others.

One spiritual gift I have is mercy. I have used this gift before to understand how others may feel and what I can do to help them feel better. I will continue to use this gift throughout my life in the congregation.

In my opinion, Tim Barnett was the most memorable speaker. His apologetics sessions took me by surprise every day! And he was very good with the campers; taking time to talk to them after every session.

There were so many group activities during FLY Beyond. Such as ultimate frisbee tournaments, basketball tournaments, volleyball, and other forms of team recreation. I also enjoyed devotions in the dorm.

*"Should I call . . ." Continued from front*

again with two or three others, which would be the deacons in the context of our constitution, and address it. Save their soul.

The situation could be public and not involve your brother or sister in Christ. Many of these situations today happen online on social media. I haven't been involved with social media for the past year for multiple reasons. I'm not saying you should get off. Maybe you should stay on. Maybe that's one place God is calling you. If you are called there, consider how to effectively communicate. You know the scenario. An important moral issue is brought up. You could comment and reach fifty (or five thousand) people, right? This may be a good idea. Some are excellent cultural commentators, for example, who bless many with the responses they post online, responding to influential peoples' ideas like politicians. But if this person whom you want to respond to is local or family, could you meet that person face-to-face sometime?

In that situation, which would be more effective, online or in-person, or both? I can't give you a hard-and-fast rule, but I will tell you that one thing missing in our culture is face-to-face interaction. Those fifty (or five thousand) people may read your reaction online, but they also read one hundred other things that day online. It's not that your words may be wrong or unnoticed. It's that they might be ineffective. That's because everyone is posting online, so yours may not get much attention. It's like wearing blue jeans. Even if you have the most expensive blue jeans, no one notices. Everyone wears them, so no one will ask you what brand you have. If you wear bright pink pants, someone will notice. The world needs something new, and that new usually isn't delivered in a life-changing manner through the new-same-old: social media.

On the other hand, in-person interaction may turn heads. First of all, the person who brought up the moral issue online will notice that something caused you to take the time to say, "Hi, I saw your post, I would like to hear more..." and there may be an open door. If any change happens, it could take months (or years?), but that's probably one reason why God speaks about perseverance so much. "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

Who knows how many hundreds walked by that tax booth of Matthew, angry with this greedy man, who was also viewed as a Jewish traitor employed by the Roman government? Yet, one walked by, and said, "Hi." Actually, what He really said was "Follow me" (Matthew 9:9). Jesus had an impact in his different approach to Matthew. He didn't sacrifice his

*Next page...*

mission in accepting an invitation to dine at Matthew's house, but rather fulfilled it. Besides having Matthew's attentive ear, Jesus now had a greater captive audience: fans, Matthew's friends whom others were calling "sinners;" and also some haters, namely the Pharisees.

We might say, "Hey, but the apostles wrote letters! Isn't that like emails and social media? What they left behind wasn't so much in-person, but distance-communication! We have these letters in the Bible." Like I said, don't count electronic communication out. Nonetheless, what did Paul say?

Paul had a tough time with the Christians (and non-Christians masquerading as Christians) in Corinth. They doubted his apostleship. Yet, what did he say in 2 Corinthians 10:9-11? "I do not want to appear to be frightening you with my letters. For they say, 'His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.' Let such a person understand that what we say by letter when absent, we do when present."

To the Christians in Rome: "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine" (1:11-12). Also, "I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while" (15:24)

Those are just two examples to show that Paul didn't write so that he could avoid these Christians. If it were up to him, he'd be there in-person. He wrote out of necessity.

When we read "necessity," let's not think

that means second-best. Yes, this current world isn't heaven. That's a fact. It's worse than second best. But that doesn't mean we look down upon the Word of God, which includes these letters. It's how God communicates to us in this broken world. We shouldn't think, "Well, God could have come to us in-person, but He just gave us letters."

Although we can't see God face-to-face and live (Exodus 33:20), He came to us in the flesh: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Before we say, "But he's not here now," we must consider these promises:

- Jesus said: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (Matthew 18:20)
- Before He left, He said, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)
- Did He not also say, "This is My body...this is My blood"? Is that not bodily presence based on His Word?

So, Jesus is actually bodily present with us. His resurrected body has this power. Think of the powers He had to walk through walls (John 20:19), so likewise, His resurrected body has the divine power to physically be present with us.

So, God did write to us, but He accompanied His Words with His presence in His Son. That presence of the Son is salvation. I hope this article gave food for thought. Don't get legalistic about choosing when you should meet, call, or type. Rather, do it prayerfully, wisely, humbly. And especially when you have to meet with someone and it is stressful, it won't be just you two. Count one more in. Jesus is actually with you as you go. "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

## UPCOMING AFLC EVENTS

### Association Retreat Center (ARC) ~ Osceola, WI

For more information, visit [www.arc-aflc.org](http://www.arc-aflc.org)

- ❖ Young Adults Retreat ~ Sept. 23-25

### Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

For more information, visit [www.aflc.org](http://www.aflc.org)

- ❖ Pastors' Conference ~ Oct. 4-6

### Free Lutheran Bible College & Seminary ~ Plymouth, MN

For more information, visit [flbc.edu](http://flbc.edu)

- ❖ Spotlight: Defending Life ~ Oct. 9
- ❖ UpClose ~ Oct. 20

### NW MN District

More information to appear on church website, Facebook page, and future bulletins

- ❖ WMF Fall Rally at Our Savior's Lutheran, 502 1st St, Argyle ~ Oct. 8
- ❖ NW MN District Annual Meeting at Our Saviour's, 2075 Hwy S, TRF ~ Oct. 16
- ❖ Special Meetings at Our Saviour's in TRF, Dr. Martin Horn speaking ~ Oct. 14-16
- ❖ Spiritual Life Meetings at Westaker in Newfolden, Pr. Phill Hooper speaking ~ Oct. 23-26
- ❖ Special Meetings at Oiland, Pastor Terry Olson speaking ~ Oct. 23-26