

Pastor Janneke's Page

Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

January 28-29, 2017

Welcome, Visitors!

If you are reading this as a visitor or guest at Faith or as someone looking over our church website, I thank you! Sioux Falls has so many wonderful congregations. We are glad that you would take the opportunity to worship with us "Faith Lutherans"! Most of this little page, however, will be directed toward our members as they seek to extend a warm welcome for visitors and guests. The boldface sections below are reprinted with permission from District President Sailer's December 2016 article in the Lutheran Witness, "Gift Ideas for Visitors."

1. Give them the gift of a parking space close to the church. Those of us who are able-bodied church members should park farther away in the parking lot so guests can find a spot closer to the church entrance. But for any activity at your church that will draw a larger crowd, any day of the week, those of us who are physically able ought to be sensitive to the physical limitations of those who have a hard time walking, member or non-member alike. Let them have the closer spaces.

2. Give our visitors the gift of easy access to a place to sit in the pew. Slide over to the middle of the pew when you settle in for worship. No one likes trying to step over others to get a place to sit. Guests will appreciate your thoughtfulness in making space for them at the end of the pews.

3. Give visitors the gift of helpfulness. Orders of worship in the Lutheran Church can be a bit hard to follow at times, especially for those who are not accustomed to liturgical worship. If the guest seems "lost" in the service, show him or her what page in the bulletin or hymnal you are on.

4. Give them the gift of warmth. Greet guests with a smile and introduce yourself. Ask them their name. This shows concern and interest in them as people. This is a good time to remind us all that people will visit a church for the first time out of some felt need, for example, "I need to get back to God" or "I need to find a Sunday school for my child." Many will visit a second or third time because the congregation was warm and friendly toward them.

It's a *blessing* when new faces and new families join us! Also, in a congregation of 700 members, there are certainly other members whom you do not yet know. Take the initiative and introduce yourself. Learn their names. Remind them that you're glad they're here. Offer to give them a little tour. Sit with them in Bible study or help them find Sunday school classrooms. Extend the welcome that Christ has shown us all!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Kory Janneke