

Church Office

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Meeting location

Marshall Middle School

25 S. Pontiac, Janesville

Pastor:

John Swanson

*Declaring the greatness of God and serving
others for joy and His honor (II Cor. 4:5)*



December 30, 1998

Dear Friend,

Recently I heard a report on a radio news show stating the findings of a recent poll on American religious life. This poll reported that a majority of Americans believe it is possible to have a real faith in God without having any affiliation with a church or other organized community of faith.

I know it is possible for people to give assent to the existence of a god and to express that belief in their personal life. However, it can be demonstrated both biblically and experientially that rarely can a person grow in their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ apart from a flourishing relationship with His people. Just as a log that is taken out of a fire quickly quits burning, so when a person who is seeking to know and love God is separated from others who are like-minded, the fire of faith usually grows cold. The simple fact is that we need each other if we are going to persist in following after Christ.

The author to the Hebrews says it this way: "Let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day approaching."

In order to help people develop those kinds of relationships it is my prayer and aim to have each person affiliated with our church over the age of 13 involved in a small group. I am absolutely convinced that we will never grow in our delight in God unless we are regularly with others who are seeking to delight in God. Small groups are one of the best ways for you and I to get connected to others who are seeking Him.

As of mid-January there will be six Discovery Groups plus the Wednesday evening women's fellowship. In addition I will be starting a men's bible study on a weekday morning from 10:30am to noon. The Discovery Group leaders are Todd Cook (Sunday pm), Ed Wojciechowski (Tues. pm), Steve Shradel (Wed. pm), Mike Morgan (Tues. pm), Dan Martin (Thur. pm) and John Swanson (night TBA). If you would like to get involved in one of these small group opportunities please call one of the leaders or the church office (Cherie Wojciechowski is coordinating the woman's group).

To aid us in our understanding of how we as a church grow in our delight in God, the sermon series in January is entitled, "Church Improvement: Building a Church that Delights in God". The schedule is as follows:

1/3/99	Jesus Builds His Church	Acts 1: 1-8
1/10/99	Remodeling Hearts with the Hammer of God's Word	Jeremiah 23: 16-32
1/17/99	From the Ground Up: Building Children into Faith-Filled Adults	Mark 10: 13-16
1/24/99	Building Relationships that Build People	Colossians 3: 12-17
1/31/99	Adding On: Making Room(s) for All God's People	Matthew 28: 16-20

I am praying that God will use us in one another's lives so that we will be "mutually encouraged by each others faith."

Growing together with you,