

**Ms. Nancy Friedrich**  
**St. John's Lutheran, Knoxville, TN**

**Tell us a little about yourself and how you serve.**

First and foremost, I'm a baptized Child of God. I'm married (39 years) to Jim. We have three grown sons, two daughters-in-law and three granddaughters. Jim and I both left corporate America and became public school teachers. We recently retired from teaching in order to care for family and serve our community more.

I have the opportunity to serve God and my neighbor in a variety of ways: Taught high school Sunday School for 39 years and organized trips to Youth Gatherings. Also worked with Pastor Amy Figg Ley and the youth of St. John's Lutheran, Knoxville to create a 501c3 called WOW (Win Our World) Urban Ministry, working with youth across the southeast in three key areas: faith formation, leadership development and urban ministry. I served as the Executive Director of WOW for 17 years.

Have you ever been to New Sumatra, Indonesia? My husband, youngest son Jacob and I served as short-term ELCA missionaries there for two summers.

I did a short gig on Synod Council – loved learning about the wider church.

I currently on Synod Guatemala Team, raising awareness and funds for our companion synod ILAG; I organize the Guatemala Gala, have visited and served alongside Pastora Karen Castillo at ILAG three times.

In the Knoxville community, I primarily serve with VMC (Volunteer Ministry Center), an organization serving those experiencing homelessness. We fix meals, play games, connect, and I currently serve as Board Chair for this organization.

When I'm not visiting granddaughters out of state, I can be found driving a Mobile Meal route.

**What is your favorite Bible verse and why?**

Matthew 11:42 "If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward." Sometimes I look at the hurting and homeless and the heart-breaking sadness in our world and my community and I feel helpless. Then I consider my "circle of influence" and recognize I can make a difference, right here, right now. This scripture reminds me that I don't have to save the world, that I am enough, and can serve God and my neighbor with "even a cup of cold water."

Where have you seen God recently?

**Where have I not seen God?**

Specifically, I saw God in Olga. Two weeks ago I delivered a meal to Olga during our monthly Porch Visit to seniors/home bound members of our congregation. Olga is 15 years younger than I am and was unexpectedly hit with a serious health issue. Of course I haven't seen her during the past 10-pandemic months and assumed she would be sad and depressed... but she was glowing! God filled her heart and soul with peace that surpasses understanding. Yes, I saw God in Olga's smile.

**When/how have you been blessed by God's abundance?**

I can't begin to explain God's abundance in my life: from the abundance of tangible things such as food, housing, family, clothing, medical care to the non-tangibles of faith, grace and joy. Early

in the pandemic my faithful feisty 91-year old mom died (not from Covid). Though we miss her, there was a sense of abundant gratitude to God from a life well lived.