



# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

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November 29, 2020

## "What Is Advent?"

"The celebration of [Advent](#) is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come." ~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"God of hope, I look to you with an open heart and yearning spirit. During this Advent season, I will keep alert and awake, listening for your word and keeping to your precepts. My hope is in you." ~ Matthew Kelly

### What Is Advent? History & Meaning

For many Christians unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there may be some confusion surrounding the meaning of the Advent season. Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of [Christ's](#) birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but there's more to Advent.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. Scholars believe that during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus ([Matthew 2:1](#)), his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist ([John 1:29](#)), and his first miracle at Cana ([John 2:1](#)). During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.

### Advent Today - Dates for 2020

Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. At that time, the new Christian year begins with the twelve-day celebration of Christmastide, which lasts from Christmas Eve until Epiphany on January 6. Advent begins on Sunday that falls between November 27<sup>th</sup> and December 3<sup>rd</sup> each year) **Advent 2020 begins on Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, and ends on Thursday, December 24.** Advent symbolizes the present situation of the church in these "last days" ([Acts 2:17](#), [Hebrews 1:2](#)), as God's people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God's past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ's coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ's kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" perfectly represents the church's cry during the Advent season:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appears.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

While Israel would have sung the song in expectation of Christ's first coming, the church now sings the song in commemoration of that first coming and in expectation of the second coming in the future.

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### PRAYER CHAIN

#### REQUESTS

Please call

Eleanor Galik

708-302-1686

for immediate prayers



Living in the Word...that the Word may live in others.

### Living Word Lutheran Church

16301 South Wolf Road  
Orland Park, IL 60467

708-403-9673

livingwordorland.org  
intouchlwlc@yahoo.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS  
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

**\*\* NEW SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

**9:00 am Adult study**  
**10:00 am Worship**

## This Week at Living Word

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b><u>29</u></b>                      9:00 am Adult Bible Study                      9:30 am Worship Communion</p>	<p><b><u>30</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>1</u></b>                      9:00 am – 12:00 pm Preschool                      10:00 am PUSH                      9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy</p>	<p><b><u>2</u></b>                      9:00 am – 12:00 pm Preschool                      9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy</p>	<p><b><u>3</u></b>                      9:00 am – 12:00 pm Preschool                      9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy</p>	<p><b><u>4</u></b>                      9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy</p>	<p><b><u>5</u></b></p>

## Church Contacts and Stewardship

### Church Contacts

**Pastor Steven Lee**

*intouchlwc@yahoo.com*

**Ministry Support Coordinator, Diana Motel**

*dianamotel@yahoo.com*

#### Leadership Team

**Rick Boehm** - President

**Bobbi Pote** - Treasurer

**Diana Motel** - Secretary

#### Members at Large

Jim McKinney

Pastor John Bucka

Donna Wasilkoff

### Stewardship Snapshot for November 22nd

**23 Worshipped**

**8 Watched Online**

**2 Watched DVD's**

**33 Total**

#### Financial Support

1,595.00 General Fund

10,000.00 General Fund Special Donation

10,000.00 Building Maintenance Special Donation

**\$21,595.00 Total Deposit**

Living Word's budget calls for weekly offerings averaging \$3654 to fund our ministry. Regular, intentional and meaningful contributions from what the Lord provides you helps carry this out.

## "December Happenings"

**LOOKING FOR A NEW CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE.** We are in need of a donated tree for our church this year. In the past couple of years we have noticed that the lights on the old tree stopped working and some of the branches have fallen out. If you are thinking about getting a new tree for your house this year and have one to donate, we will give it a good home. Also if you available to donate an hour or two to help us decorate our church this year for the Advent Season, we can use your help. We will still maintain social distancing and safety protocols to ensure your safety and health. It would be nice to have a beautifully decorated church for the blessed season.

**CHRISTMAS SERVICE SURVEY FORMS** are located on the table, please make sure you fill out your desired service preference for wither a Christmas Eve or Christmas Day service and if you will be bringing guests. This way we can be prepared for social distancing and trying to keep everyone safe and still worship during this blessed season.

**PHIL'S FRIENDS** will be our Mission of the Month for December. They are looking to make care packages with certain items that are most needed to serve an additional 200 Friend's. There will also be a door offering later in the month as well. Please see Diana Motel for more information.

**TREE DECORATING** time again. We will have another Christmas tree on display given to us by the village of Orland Park in front of the Village Hall. We have ornaments and decorations from last year for our tree, plus the kids from preschool and the Nature Academy made their own as well. Diana was out in the rain on Wednesday decorating our tree for us.



## Classes & Groups

**ADULT SUNDAY FORUM** has resumed meeting again each Sunday with a new start time of **9:00 a.m.** Join us each week in our new location in the **south classroom or conference room**, even though it might be a smaller group than usual, we still want to maintain safe social distancing.

**PUSH PRAYER** meets every **Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.** to pray for our church, community and world. We welcome requests (call 708.403.9673) or join us for 30-40 minutes each week.



## RADIO & TV OPPORTUNITIES

- **Worship Anew** 8:00 a.m. Sunday - Comcast channel 184 (TLN) & 8 (SD) , WPWR channel 50 AT&T U-verse channel 1008 (HD) & 8 (SD), Dish Network # 8495 10:30 a.m. Sunday - DIRECTV channel 377 (TCT)
- **The Lutheran Hour** 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sundays on 1230 AM; and 9:30a.m. Sundays on 1580 AM

**DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE WEEK** Another prayer that God delights in is prayer asking that we would glorify God in our lives. Life in the Spirit uses any good we do to point to God. The more we agree that we want this to happen, the more we will see God working in our lives.

## GROWTH & OPPORTUNITIES...

**HELP US GROW OUR CHURCH** In these unprecedented times it is important to get back to the basics. Remember how lively and full our church was back in the '90's, or just a few years ago even, we are trying to get back to that status. Please don't forget about us at this time. We miss seeing you here at church and we would like to be able to have more regular attendance at service every Sunday. We have been worshipping together since May 31st and haven't had any issues with COVID or any other illnesses. The church gets cleaned weekly, and now since both preschool and the Nature Exploration Academy has started up again, it gets cleaned two to three times a week, plus we have been going thru a lot more disinfectant spray and wipes. Your safety and health are still the utmost important aspect, but at the same time, the future of our church is starting to depend on your help. Your offerings, and helpful talents have been so appreciated in the past, and we look forward to receiving those benefits again. The transition team has been back in full swing working on the call process, please be on the lookout for more information to come in the coming weeks and months.

**POW (People of the Word) Bible Study Time Change to 10:00am.** Please consider joining us to reconnect with others in this fellowship and most importantly in God's word, which is so needed in this time of our history. They are finishing their study on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm and will be starting one or two small Advent studies for the first couple of weeks in December. If you have any questions, contact Donna at 708-949-9340.

**PRAYER REQUESTS??** There is a brand new feature on our website. Diana Motel has added a link where you can add a prayer request during the week. The website will automatically forward that request to me so your prayer request will be added to our list for Sunday morning prayers. If any request comes in by Tuesday morning, I always have our prayer group include those requests in their prayers as well.

**PAINTERS NEEDED!** Jim McKinney and a couple of people will be painting the bathrooms over Christmas break. If you are willing to help out as needed and have a little extra time to spare during that period of time, please see Jim McKinney for details and information.

**ALUMINUM CANS** are being collected again. Randy Hodo will be taking over this project and will be crushing and recycling the cans to help raise a little bit more cash for the church.

**PLEASE SEND** in any new contact information such as change of address and/or phone numbers via email or phone call. The new directory is about a third completed and just so you know, it will be a photo directory, so if you haven't done so yet please send me a recent photo. I will send particular requests to those that I still need something from. Thank you to all that have given me the information that was requested.

**POINTSETTIA ORDER FORMS** are in the worship folder and also on the table in the fellowship hall, cost for each is still \$7.50 and the order forms are due by Sunday, December 13th.



## *"Letter from Northern Illinois District"*

### **A Statement on Tier 3 Mitigation Measures**

Dear Pastors and Congregational Chairs,

Last week, I issued a statement, assuring you that your NID staff would continue to monitor state agencies for updates on mitigation measures that are being set in place by Governor Pritzker in an attempt to keep the public safe in the midst of this pandemic. On November 17, in response to the record-high Covid-19 positivity rates currently being experienced in Illinois, Governor Pritzker issued new mitigations, moving the entire state to the more-restrictive, Tier 3 measures. These measures are to take effect on Friday, November 20.

So that you may be informed as to what is going on in your communities as a result of these new measures, you are encouraged to go to the state of Illinois' website and read the Tier 3 orders as well as the Illinois Department of Public Health's six-page report on houses of worship: [www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/places-worship-guidance](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/places-worship-guidance). As our NID staff has reviewed these documents the following may be most significant to your congregation:

1. The State is highly encouraging churches to follow the Tier 3 mitigation measures for occupancy restrictions and social gatherings wherever possible.
2. For Word and Sacrament worship services, these mitigation measures are recommendations, not mandates. Please keep up good and holy work as you provide God's Word and sacrament to congregations. Thank you also for not forgetting your faithful witness to your community.
3. Other activities that take place outside of worship services [such as potlucks, group Bible studies, board meetings, etc.] should follow the Tier 3 mitigation measures.
4. The state has specifically cited weddings and funerals as falling under the Tier 3 mitigation measures. Please check with your local health department officials for specific questions related to this.
5. Where in-person worship does take place, churches are always encouraged to follow the physical and social distancing guidelines as set forth by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

We are heartened to hear how pastors and laity are working together to bring Christ-like care to all in the midst of this crisis. If there's any way we at the NID office may be of service to you, please reach out to us.

We continually lift you up in prayer at the NID office, giving thanks to our Lord for your faithful service, and asking Him to continue to shield you from harm as you bring the gift of His compassionate mercy and the hope of salvation in Christ to the communities you serve. May we be blessed by and reflective of our Lord's encouragement in I Corinthians 15:58. "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

We will continue to stay up to date on any new measures our state may take to combat this pandemic, and we will continue to keep you informed. We are in this together, and the Almighty Lord is with us all!

Thank you for your faithful service to our Lord and His people.

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss

President, LCMS Northern Illinois District

**LIVING WORD CHURCH COUNCIL RESPONSE:** Seeing that we are a small congregation and wear our masks and keep to social distancing guidelines, we are confident to continue worshipping in person, however we are asking you that you keep your own safety and health in mind and do what is best for you. We will continue to stream the services on our website and Facebook page as well as YouTube. Please do not hesitate to ask for a DVD of our worship service in lieu of watching it via the computer. Originally Pastor Lee and Elaine said they would continue to lead worship and Bible study each week, however they will be self isolating themselves for the next week or two as a couple of their family members had tested positive for COVID. Please join me in keeping the entire Lee family in our prayers for their continued health.

Pastor Lee would like for me to let everyone know that they appreciate all of your prayers and concerns, and they want you to know they are both fine and have no symptoms, they are just erring on the side of caution to keep everyone else safe. They want to make sure that they are following all appropriate protocols and procedures. I will be in contact with them frequently and will advise Pastor Lee of any concerns you may have. At the same time Pastor Lee will be giving me updates for both him and Elaine as well as their family, which I will pass on to everyone in the congregation.