



IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 29, Issue 29

December 20, 2020

"When Glory was Birthed in a Barn"

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"And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." [Luke 2:6-7 ESV](#)

There, Salvation was nestled among animal food. And, we wonder over God, this God who stepped off His throne and into human skin, laying Himself into a manger—a mere animal trough—on the first Christmas. Glory Himself was birthed into baby cheeks and tiny hands by a young, scandal-surrounded girl.

How is it that we find the King of all in such a place? How is it that the Almighty God, the great I Am, bends Himself into a world of labor pains and dirty animals?

And, it's at times like this that I find myself both awestruck and inexpressibly moved by the story of Jesus' birth. Of course, it's a familiar one, and most of us can see the story line from miles away.

But what consistently moves my heart? It's the common. Each year, I find myself analyzing the details of the miraculous story of the first Christmas, trying to imagine what it must have felt like to witness the great and awesome God stepping into the everyday of some simple folks.

Because, it's natural for us to attach the concepts of splendor and power and mind-blowing radiance to our God. *We exalt Him. We praise Him* for the attributes we can hardly understand—His sovereign ways, His unsearchable wisdom, His unfailing love. He stands far above us, and we marvel, speechless at His majesty.

Therefore, it is not without near bewilderment that we hold the magnificence of the King of kings in one hand, and the everyday, common details of the true story of Christmas in the other. And then, we bring the two concepts together, *to mix in perfect, mind-blowing union.*

Suddenly, we see the [Nativity](#), the birth of Jesus Christ, with fresh eyes—a young girl, average in every way, from Nazareth; an unsuspecting young man about to be married. A dusty manger. A group of shepherds caring for their herd, as they have every other long night.

How could they have known? And, friends, how could we know? How could we know at what point that routine aspect of our lives is actually showing up on God's holy radar, just about at the point of a great intersection of mundane and miraculous?

Clearly, He is a God who magnifies the mundane in order to accomplish His miracles. This is the God we exalt. This is the barn-born baby known as Jesus, who embraced humble obedience in the common life in order to accomplish extraordinary glory, eternally. *Maybe that can be true of me. Maybe that can be true of you.*

This Christmas, may we peer more intently into that average world tucked into the familiar story of Jesus' birth. Maybe we'll even see a reflection of our own average world, but with new expectancy and hope.

Let's anticipate the [coming birth of our glorious Savior](#). And, let's remember, though He be *far above us*, the miracle of Christmas is that He has *come near to us*, into our world, into our routine life.

He is both Majesty *and* a God who presses into our days, our *everydays*. And, He whispers Life into those dusty, disgraced, and dull places—and we are never, ever the same.

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

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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
20 9:00 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship—COMM CONGREGATIONAL MEETING	21	22 10:00 am PUSH	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 pm LIVE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 	26

Church Contacts and Stewardship

Church Contacts

Pastor Steven Lee

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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 December 6th

16 Worshipped, 16 Communed

14 Watched Online

3 Watched DVD's

33 Total

Financial Support

995.00 General Fund

80.00 For Phil's Friends Mission of the Month

\$1,075.00 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.

Stewardship Snapshot for December 13th

25 Worshipped

12 Watched Online

2 Watched DVD's

39 Total

Financial Support

3,260.00 General Fund

66.00 For Phil's Friends Mission of the Month

50.00 For Preschool Account

615.00 Nature Exploration Academy Building Use

150.00 Cook County Elections Building Use

\$4,141.00 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.

12/20/2020 Message Outline

"The Lord's Great Love"

Psalm 89:1 says, "I will sing of the Lord's great love forever." Today's Advent readings tell the story of three people who sang about the Lord's great love. We too rejoice in His great love for us...!

1) King David sang about the Lord's great PARDON.

"Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

2 Samuel 7:16

2) The Apostle Paul sang about the Lord's great PEACE.

²⁵ Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, ²⁶ but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Romans 16:25-27

3) Mary sang about the Lord's great PROMISE.

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." ³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail." ³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:26-38

"December Happenings"

WE WILL HAVE A CHRISTMAS EVE LIVE/IN PERSON SERVICE and it will be at 5:00 pm on December 24th. As always, the service will be live streamed and available on our website, Facebook and YouTube pages.

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. Please see the Mission of the Month table in the fellowship hall for more details and the box and basket to drop things off. There will also be a door offering during the month as well. The offering plate is outside the sanctuary door. Please see Diana Motel for more information.



TREE DECORATING time again. We have another Christmas tree on display given to us by the village of Orland Park and its located in front of the Village Hall. There are ornaments and decorations from last year for our tree, plus the kids from preschool and the Nature Academy made their own as well. Diana and Kyle Motel and Paul and Isabella Huang were out in the rain 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

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.

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.

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2021 are available and on the table in the fellowship hall.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING We would like to invite everyone to join us today after service for a congregational meeting. The majority of the meeting will be introducing you to the 8 potential Pastors the transition team has been reviewing. If you will not be able to attend this meeting in person we will be live streaming it on YouTube. You will need to click on this link <https://youtu.be/WXp3Mnhynl> as this will not be a public live stream. We plan to be live by 11:05. Please give us a little grace as this will be our 1st time live streaming a meeting. You should be able to comment during the live if you have any questions or concerns. This link will be available even after the meeting to watch at your convenience. We do ask that you let us know only issues you may have with a potential Pastors and want taken off the list by the 23rd. The Transition Team can then move forward in scheduling interviews. Diana is working on links if any of these Pastors have live stream worships that you could check out. These would be presented on the 20th. These would be passed out today. As always continue to pray for the church during this call process.

PRESCHOOL GROWTH is happening for the new year! We now have 2 more students that will definitely start in January. Jordie will be two days a week and his cousin Audrey will also be 2 days week and potentially 3 days a week. We also have a possibility that 2 - 3 more students will be joining us once Christmas break is over.