

IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 29, Issue 27

December 6, 2020

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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

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Orland Park, IL 60467

708-403-9673

livingwordorland.org
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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

"Comfort for God's People"

Whether we are reading the daily paper, listening to the radio, or watching TV, the news is filled with what one might call the fruits of discouragement and even despair. Life is like a continuous newsreel showing the futile actions of people trying to live without a biblical hope, one solidly fixed on God as their defense and refuge.

Without question, we live in a strife-ridden world, one torn by wars, by famine, by disease and sickness, by natural disasters of gigantic proportion, by injustices and corrupt governments run by self-seeking politicians who are like capricious children ([Isa. 3:4](#)). But what is even worse, they rule over a populace that by-in-large has become indifferent to the moral improprieties in its leaders. Ours is a world polluted by demonic powers and humanistic ideas where man is wise in his own eyes and clever in his own sight. Through this satanically-inspired, man-made wisdom, man perverts and distorts what is good and wholesome, and in the process, takes people further and further away from God. As it was in Isaiah's day, evil is called good, and good evil, darkness is substituted for light and light for darkness, bitter is substituted for sweet and sweet for bitter ([Isa. 5:20](#)). The root of the problem is that we have become wise in our own eyes and clever in our own sight ([Isa. 5:21](#)) for we now live in a day where we have not only taken prayer out of the schools, but where it is against the law for a teacher or even a judge to have a copy of the Ten Commandments in their class or courtroom.

In the first chapters of Isaiah, the prophet graphically portrays this whole scenario when man rejects God's revelation and turns to his own cleverness. Had there been a *Jerusalem Gazette* in Isaiah's day, I would imagine its front page was not greatly different from the front pages of our newspapers today.

Certainly, ours is a day that needs to hear Isaiah's cry where he sarcastically addresses the rulers in Jerusalem (the capital) and the people of the nation, Israel: "Hear the word of the Lord, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, You people of Gomorrah" ([Isa. 1:10](#)).

Sadly and ironically Isaiah's day, as with our day, was also a day of great religiosity.

Daily events demonstrate two things in America today:




(1) The restless and yet futile activity of a world full of people who know not the comfort of God because they refuse to live under the shelter of the Most High so that they might enjoy the shadow (the comfort and protection) of the Almighty.

(2) The tragic results of man's choice to ignore God's shelter. The result is a society that, in its mad pursuit to find meaning and happiness without God, is bombarded by spiritual, social, and moral decay. Isaiah portrays this as the constant churning of a restless sea with its waves constantly buffeting the shore and casting up mire and mud. What a graphic picture of the moral pollution that covers society.



December 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy 10:00 am PUSH	2 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	3 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 10:00 am CHAPEL DAY 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	4 10:00 am POW Bible Study 1:00 pm Transition Team Meeting	5
6 9:00 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship—COMM	7 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	8 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy 10:00 am PUSH	9 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	10 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	11 10:00 am POW Bible Study	12
13 9:00 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship	14 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	15 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy 10:00 am PUSH	16 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	17 9:00am – 12:00pm Preschool 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	18 10:00 am POW Bible Study	19
20 9:00 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship—COMM	21 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	22 10:00 am PUSH	23 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 pm LIVE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 	26
27 9:00 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship	28 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	29 10:00 am PUSH	30 9:00–3:00 Nature Exploration Academy	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 		

December Celebrations



December 11	Bryan Boehm
December 17	Eleanor Galik
December 17	Jennifer Lange
December 29	Pam Hostert
December 30	Rick Boehm



*Happy Baptism
Birthday!*

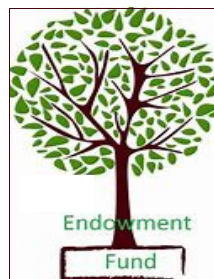
December 1	Joan Tinich
December 8	Peter Gabrysiak
December 8	Patrick Gabrysiak
December 10	Eric Hann
December 14	Karen Lange
December 16	Pat Johnson
December 16	Bruce Kempke
December 18	Carolyn Wagenaar
December 20	Hank Kalis

LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 11/30/2020)

The current value of the fund is \$156,286.37 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$33,694.77. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$37,610.87. Of this, \$18,805.44 will return to Living Word for growth initiatives.

THIS REPRESENTS A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING!

To Date:	Total contributions	\$84,980.73
	Market value over cost	33,694.77
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>37,610.87</u>
	Total market value	\$156,286.37



HOW THE ENDOWMENT FUND WORKS

Contributions treated as donation for tax purposes

Funds invested by Thrivent Financial

50% of interest and dividends available for church growth

Interested in estate planning? Call Tim Regan/Thrivent (708-326-4750)

If any questions, call Bob Grossart

Church Contacts and Stewardship

Church Contacts

Pastor Steven Lee

intouchlwlc@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 Thanksgiving

17 Watched Online

13 Watched DVD's

30 Total

Stewardship Snapshot for November 29th

20 Worshipped, 19 Communed

14 Watched Online

2 Watched DVD's

36 Total

Financial Support

1,350.00 General Fund

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.

12/06/2020 Message Outline

"God's Christmas Kiss"

What are the ghosts in your life? Psalm 85:10 says: *"Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other."* Today we lay our ghosts to rest through God's Christmas kiss...

1) God kisses our past through our CONFESSION.

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" ⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Mark 1:1-8

2) God kisses our present with His COMFORTER.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Isaiah 40:1-2

3) God kisses our future by Christ's COMING.

⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. ¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

2 Peter 3:9-12

"December Happenings"

WE WILL HAVE A CHRISTMAS EVE LIVE/IN PERSON SERVICE and it will be at 5:00 pm on December 24th.

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 and its located 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 and Kyle Motel and Paul and Isabella Huang were out in the rain the day before Thanksgiving 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.

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 23rd 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.



TAHANK YOU to Ed Baidis, Pastor John and George Hostert for helping us get our Christmas tree and decorations down. Diana Motel, Donna Wasilkoff, Jackie Schultheiss, Josh Reagan and Pastor John helped decorate our church. Thank you for everyone's help this week. Lord's blessings that we will once again be able to celebrate the reason for this season, birth of Jesus.

"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. 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.

WELCOME BACK PASTOR AND ELAINE LEE! With the good Lord's blessings, Pastor Lee will be leading us in worship again today. Thank you to Pastor John for being here and filling in as our ever faithful Pastor. We are thankful that all of our prayers were answered and that we have Pastor and Elaine with us again! You both were missed.