

# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 30, Issue 38

September 26, 2021

## "What Does It Mean to Truly Seek God?"

*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. ~2 Chronicles 7:14*

|                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| <b>Inside this issue:</b>             |      |
| "What Does It Mean to Truly Seek God" | 1    |
| This Week at Living Word              | 2    |
| Celebrations, Contacts, Stewardship   | 2    |
| Community Events                      | 2    |
| 9-26-21 Message Outline               | 3    |
| Important Information                 | 3    |
| Mission of the Month                  | 3    |
| St. Paul Lutheran Church              | 4 -6 |
| Church News                           | 7    |
| Zoom Bible Study                      | 7    |
| Donation Opportunities                | 8    |

### 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

God's call is not to Hollywood, Washington, or the media, but to us. If "My people" turn back to Me I will heal and restore. Lets take a closer look at the third command:

### How Can We Seek God Today?

We have a form of microwave Christianity. Service times are cut to just over an hour, prayer is glanced over, and worship is designed to entertain the masses. "People are bored," they say, "so our services need to be more appealing."

Church is boring because the power of God has vanished from many congregations...there is a lack of desire to pursue Him in the pulpit as well as in the pew. Like Samson, they "know not that the Spirit of the Lord has departed" (cf. Judge 16:20). But there is hope if we once again seek God. To seek in this context means to "find what is missing." The Hebrew word for seek, *baqash*, has a very strong meaning. Imagine losing your child in a crowded mall. Your entire heart would be engaged. How would you spend your time? Where would your energy be concentrated? Now parallel this with seeking God. I've often said that one of the most difficult challenges associated with pastoring is not sermon preparation, leading a church, or taxing counseling appointments; it's witnessing the tragic results of spiritual dehydration—watching people die spiritually with living water just steps away. Sadly, we are too busy and too self-absorbed to truly seek Him with all our strength.

In today's culture, there are countless enticements that pull us away from truly seeking God. It is my firm belief that, second only to salvation, seeking God is the most important aspect of the Christian life...to truly know God: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Very few of us ever experience this close relationship with God because it involves things such as humility, dying to self, vibrant prayer, and heart-felt worship. This isn't meant to discourage, but to convict. Conviction is a wonderful gift from God used to turn the heart back to Him.

Let's be honest: how many can truly say like Jeremiah, "His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot" (Jeremiah 20:9)? How many have truly experienced Jesus' words in John 7:38, "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water?" How many can truly relate to "times of refreshing" found in Acts 3:19? How many really understand the words of John the Baptist when he cried out, "After me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matthew 3:11)? Many have head knowledge, but they've never truly experienced the presence of God. Most never seek God because of ongoing and unconfessed sin. Being tempted isn't sin—surrendering to it is. Temptation is also an opportunity to do what is right by turning from it. 1 Corinthians 10:13 states, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." This "way of escape" is ultimately what tilts the scale toward seeking God. When we flee temptation, turn from sin, and seek God, the by-product is the filling of the Spirit. The door of temptation swings both ways—you can enter or exit. If we choose to enter, once inside, we may not see the exit sign so clearly again.

## This Week at Living Word

| Sun  | Mon       | Tue                        | Wed       | Thu       | Fri      | Sat      |
|--|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| <b>26</b><br>9:00 am Adult Study<br>10:00 am Worship | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b><br>10:00 am PUSH | <b>29</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> |

## Celebrations This Week

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <br><b>Sept 17</b> David Merchantz<br><b>Sept 24</b> Tom DiGrazia | <br><b>Sept 28</b> Henry Kalis<br><b>Sept 30</b> Pastor Lange<br><b>Sept 30</b> Dwight Hostert | <br><b>Sept 29</b> Alexis & Mitchell Gawlik |
|--|---|--|

## Stewardship Snapshot

### September 19th

**24 Worshipped, 23 Communed**

**2 Watched DVD's**

**10 Watched Online**

**36 Total**

**Financial Support**

3,495.00 General Fund 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.

### Church Contacts

Pastor Steven Lee

[intouchlwlc@yahoo.com](mailto:intouchlwlc@yahoo.com)

**Ministry Support Coordinator, Diana Motel**

[dianamotel@yahoo.com](mailto:dianamotel@yahoo.com) 708-287-4939

### Leadership Team

**Neal Hartz** - President 847-344-2410

**Jim McKinney** - Vice President 708-359-8527

**Bill Merchantz** - Treasurer 708-539-6027

**Diana Motel** - Secretary 708-287-4939

### Members at Large

**Pastor John Bucka** 815-931-2961

**Bob Grossart** 708-870-0202

**Paul Huang** 626-551-1446

## Community Events

**On Sunday, October 3rd, from 2:00-3:30 in the afternoon**, thousands of people who recognize God's voice saying "choose life" will take that message *to the streets*. They will stand silently side-by-side, holding signs that give truthful but loving warnings and exhortations that **Abortion Hurts Women**, **Abortion Kills Children**, **Adoption: the Loving Option**, **Jesus Forgives & Heals**, and **Life-The First Inalienable Right**. **There are no graphic pictures.**

Please join them this year as they pray and witness to God's warning, "Choose Life, that you and your descendants will live"! We thank God for you as you continue to defend the life of the unborn and rescue the lives of their mothers.

Life Chain is open to all who wish to join them, the Chain will be located along 159th Street in Tinley Park and Orland Park, between Harlem Ave. and 80th Ave. It is a participation through the local churches. With our help in organizing our congregation, they will be more able to bring the 'choose life' message to our community. If you plan on attending, please arrive by 2:00pm to pickup the signs and find a spot.



### ***"Looking to the Lord"***

Psalm 104:27 says: *"All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time."* Do we trust the Lord to give us what we need, when we need it? Do we look to the Lord ...?

#### **1) What do I CRAVE?**

<sup>4</sup> The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! <sup>5</sup> We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.

Numbers 11:4-5

#### **2) What do I PRAY?**

<sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:13-16

#### **3) What do I SAY?**

<sup>38</sup> "Teacher," said John, "we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us." <sup>39</sup> "Do not stop him," Jesus said. "For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, <sup>40</sup> for whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup> Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

Mark 9:38-41

## Important Information

**UPDATED MASKS REQUIREMENTS:** we will have to require masks now. We would still like to offer communion at the altar and pre-portioned communion for those who wish to stay at their seat. If you go up for communion you can pull your mask down to receive the sacraments. Diana has this posted on Facebook and our website. I have posted the new signs at the door and it will also be in the newsletter. As always for your safety, we still have extra masks and hand sanitizer available in the fellowship as you enter, in case you don't bring one from home. Hopefully, this will be short term, but your safety and health will always be our main concern.

# ATTENTION

**YOU ARE REQUIRED TO  
WEAR A FACE MASK  
IN THIS FACILITY  
EVEN IF YOU HAVE  
BEEN VACCINATED**



## Mission of the Month

**MISSION OF THE MONTH** for September, the Mission of the Month is the African Radio Ministries, we seen a short video for their outreach and organization, and I have included some information from their website here.



In January, 2005 African Radio Ministries (ARM) began broadcasting weekly Lutheran worship programs in Africa. We are currently aimed at two regions:

In **Liberia**, programs are produced and broadcasted from four different counties in four languages: Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn and Loma.

In **Ethiopia**, programs are produced in the Addis Ababa office then broadcast from South Africa. They are offered in two languages, Amharic and Oromifa . In 2016, there were 51 church plants recorded through ARM listener groups.

Listeners may contact the ARM staff at these offices to learn more about what it means to follow Christ.



## St. Paul Lutheran Church

**PLEASE KEEP ST. PAUL LUTHERAN** in your prayers. Last Sunday, September 19, while the members and their families were outside enjoying their Oktoberfest, a fire broke out inside their church and destroyed the entire building. Even though the pastor was with a parishioner, and some other members were still in the church, thankfully, no one was injured. Please pray their congregation, their pastor and his family and the community as this effects all of them. Pastor Michael Stein from St. Paul said, *"We have a hymn wich reflects where we ar today: "Built in the Rock the Church doth stand, even when steeples are falling." Looking at the smoldering rubble is gut wrenching. All that remains of the steeple are charred and smoking timbers. Devastating. Tragic. My heart aches as the church and legacy that was lost as the church burned. The building is gone, but the church remains. The building served the church of St. Paul's well for over 150 years. The church, people of St. Paul's still stands. We proclaim thie comfort, the forgiveness, the peace, and the joy of Jesus. We are reminded that even when things seem darkest, Christ's light shines brighter. Thank you to all the fire-fighters, EMT, police and rescue personnel who came from so many different towns, You are appreciated and valued, and we pray for your continued safety. Thank you to everyone who has offered prayers and comforting words of support. Your kindness means so much."*

The fire seemed to have started in the steeple shortly after 1:00 pm and it had escalated to a Second Alarm fire around 2, and before 2:30 it had become a Third Alarm fire. First responders had come from 31 different communities to assist with the fire. The church had burned to the ground within hours. The congregation and its members are thankful though that no one was injured and the parsonage where Pastor Stein and his family lives was not damaged. Only items that had not been damaged by the fire was a cross and a chalice, and their sign.

A fund has been set up to accept donations through the Lutheran Church Charities for fire relief efforts. LCC operates with a Dollar In—Dollar Out funding process where every dollar given for the cause goes directly to the relief efforts for St. Paul. I have pictures below and on the next page showing how gorgeous the church once was and what remains of it now. We will keep St. Paul's family and members in our prayers.





# St. Paul Lutheran Church





## St. Paul Lutheran Church



## Church News

**FROM THE TRANSITION TEAM!** The transition team had met with Pastor LaBoube this past Monday evening over Zoom, and once Pastor Kass returns from his vacation and lets them know if he would like to pursue this endeavor, they will schedule a meeting with him.

**THANK YOU NOTE** was received this past week from Grace Christian Academy, it reads: *"Dear Living Word Lutheran Church, Greetings from Grace Christian Academy! We wanted to express our gratitude for your gift of \$196.00 on September 13, 2021. We are so grateful for your generosity towards Grace and our students. Your financial gift allows our families to receive the financial assistance scholarships that they need to be able to afford Christian education. Thank you for supporting our mission to provide Christian education in the Little Village neighborhood, preparing students for success in high school, college, and beyond! We would love to have you come by for a visit, so please let us know if you will be in our area and would like to stop by. Thanks again for being part of what God is doing at Grace!"* Its signed Blessings, Carlo Giannotta, Principal. The actual letter can be found on the bulletin board next to the office.

**DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK** *You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Philippians 2:5 (NLT)*

An attitude is an advance decision as to how I'm going to desire, feel, think, and act in any situation. We don't have the attitude of Christ naturally, but as we abide in Christ, the Holy Spirit changes us to be more like Christ, which starts with our attitudes, and then extends to our words and actions. So . . . Is there evidence of the Holy Spirit changing you? If not, today's a great day to begin abiding in Christ and let the Holy Spirit renew his work.

## Zoom Bible Class

**POW (People of the Word) Bible Study** has wrapped up their study on the book of Isaiah last week. They will be taking a two week break and will continue meeting on Friday, October 8th at 9:30am. For those who want to start fresh with their new study on the 8th can meet here with the group or you can join the class on Zoom. Each Thursday, I will email the link for that Friday's class so all you need to do is to click on the link to join. The parables study will last till the Advent season, and then for an Advent study they chose to read *"Our Hope Has Come"*. Please see me or call the office if you would like to join, that way we can order books for you. Not only will you gain some insight with these bible study classes, but you will have fun doing so at the same time.

**A NEED FOR YOU AND A NEED FOR CHURCH** As church attendance numbers fade across the nation and online services become very convenient (who doesn't love not getting ready in the morning or leaving the home?!), it's important to remember why church attendance for you and your family matters so much. You can't serve from your sofa. You can't have community of faith on your sofa. You can't experience the power of a room full of believers worshipping together on your sofa. Christians aren't consumers either. We are contributors. We don't watch. We engage. We give. We sacrifice. We encourage. We do life together. The church needs you. And you need the church. Wherever you are, find a local church where you and your family can be part of community and use your talents to advance the kingdom and reach others. To come alongside one another physically, not just through a screen. While I'm grateful for technology to keep people connected that can't physically come to a facility or need to be away, it's absolutely not like being in the building. Never will be. Yes, church on the sofa is nice. But it'll never be the same as church in the sanctuary. We look forward to seeing everyone in church.

A cute perspective on our Epistle Reading today. James 5:13-20

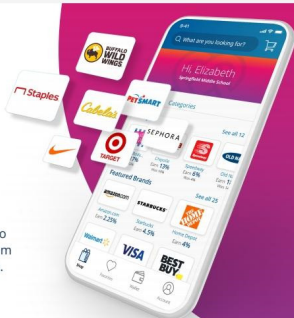




## Donation Opportunities

**NEW EARNING OPPORTUNITIES** Diana will have more ways for us to help raise money for our church just by doing our Christmas shopping, birthday shopping or buying gift cards for other happy occasions. With a mobile app, RaiseRight or the website ShopWithScrip, you can purchase gift cards for your friends, family, and even yourself and they will donate 3% of the sales to our church, I have screenshots from Diana below just to give you an idea of what it will look like, but she will also have all of this up on our website and Facebook page, and once the account gets set up, we will have a unique code to use in order for the 3% to be sent to us. This is the most safe and secure way to buy gift cards these days, trust me, I was a victim of the money on a gift card being used by criminals. Even though I had the card in my possession, a day after it was given to me, the money was already gone, and it took me several calls and emails and a bunch of paperwork, and about 6 months before I was able to receive a replacement gift card with my name on it and for me to set up a pin on the card. Still be as generous as you always are, just be aware to do it safely and securely.

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"It's super convenient. All I need to go shopping is my phone—I don't even need credit cards or my purse. I'm going to pay for these things anyway, I love being able to use gift cards so we get something in return."

Jen H., earns for hockey



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