

**GOD IS
OUR
REFUGE &
STRENGTH**



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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

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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
9:00 am Adult study
10:00 am Worship

IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 31, Issue 10

March 6, 2022

"God—My Refuge"

The truths that are intertwined within this beautiful Psalm are precious promises that every one of God's blood-bought children are able to claim as their own. However, the majority of theologians correctly identify this section as a Messianic psalm... for the Lord Jesus is the only One Who truly dwells in the shelter of the Most High. He is the Man of men, Who abides in the shadow of the Almighty.

When the eternal Son of God was born into His own creation as the perfect Son of Man, He lived His life dwelling in the shelter of the Most High. He abode in the shadow of the Almighty. He depended entirely on the Father as His refuge and fortress and demonstrated to us all how a man should live - by trusting God in all things. In many respects, the Lord Jesus is the only Man Who can legitimately claim God as His refuge and fortress - His God in Whom He trusted implicitly. But praise God that even when we fail, "GOD IS still our refuge and our strength," because of our position IN Christ.

The Lord Jesus is the one and the only Person Who could honestly claim God as His refuge and fortress - and He did this on our account because He went to the Cross for us - in obedience to His Father's will. We who are saved by grace through faith, find our everlasting refuge in Christ, Who took the punishment for our sin and became our strong Fortress, our everlasting Refuge, and the Rock of our salvation.

Jesus is the only One who can legitimately confess that the Lord is My God, in Whom I place my trust, and Who will deliver me from the snare of the fowler and the deadly pestilence. Throughout His life, the Lord Jesus was hidden under the shadow of His Father's wings, in Whom He sought refuge. God was His hiding place Who preserved Him from trouble, and because we are IN Christ, we can also sing songs of deliverance for God's faithfulness and favor towards us. We can also claim God to be our mighty Shield and an eternal Bulwark.

Throughout His earthly life, the Lord Jesus maintained ongoing and never-failing fellowship with His Father. He only did the things which He heard from His Father. He only did those things that He saw His Father doing. Throughout His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus was ready and willing to say, "Thy Will, not Mine be done." He was able to trust the Lord with every circumstance of His life, for His undivided hope was in God.


Jesus was free from every fear because His trust was in God, and in the power of the Almighty, He fulfilled all righteousness and became qualified to become the perfect, sinless sacrifice for the sake of mankind. And we are called to imitate the way He lived. We are to hide under the shadow of His wings every moment of the day and say to Him - You are my Refuge and Fortress. You are my God, in Whom I trust.

Although the Lord Jesus was fully God, He lived His entire life as a Man. He lived His life and faced His death in utter and total dependence on His heavenly Father for everything. Although the Lord Jesus was the eternal God, He lived His life as a perfect Man, setting an example to every member of the human race... showing every child of God how our heavenly Father expects each one of us to live.

No doubt the man who penned this Messianic psalm was himself convinced of the wonderful security that is found in the Lord his God because his faith was credited to him as righteousness and he could legitimately confess that his trust was in the Most High God - the Almighty King of the universe Who is signified as the Sovereign Ruler of all and the Divine Protector of those that believe on His name.

You are my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust!

This Week at Living Word

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6 9:15 am Adult Study 10:00 am Worship	7	8 10:00 am PUSH	9	10	11 9:30 am POW Bible Study Zoom and Living Word	12 

March Celebrations



March 7 Pat Johnson



March 1 Pam Hostert
March 1 Russ Tinich
March 4 Delores Urbank
March 10 Gary Meier

Contacts

Church Contacts
intouchlwc@yahoo.com

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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

Stewardship Snapshot

February 27th

21 Worshipped
2 Watched DVD's
15 Watched Online
38 Total

Financial Support

1,540.00 General Fund Deposit
115.00 David's Harp (February Mission of the Month)
 \$1,655.00 Total 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.

LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 2/28/2021)

The current value of the fund is \$166,146.23 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$33,071.21. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$48,094.29. Of this, \$24,047.15 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	33,071.21
	Dividends and interest	48,094.29
	Total market value	\$166,146.23

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



Mission of the Month

EASTER BASKET TIME! Now that it will be March, the mission of the month is the Village of Orland Park. Specifically making and putting together Easter baskets for the children of the under privileged families of the Orland Park township. So when you are out shopping at the Dollar stores and see coloring books, play dough, crayons, stickers, bubbles, sidewalk chalk or anything like that, pick up a couple of items so we can make Easter baskets for the boys and girls of Orland Park Township. Joan Fraser and her daughter have been doing these for the community for several years now, and we thought it would be a terrific and cute group effort once again for this year. As always, if its just easier donating a couple of bucks towards the baskets, our Easter bunnies don't mind doing the shopping. Lol.



Easter 2022

LIVING WORD EASTER EGG HUNT RETURNS. The Easter Egg Hunt was such a huge success, Diana already has been planning the activity for this year. Hopefully since Easter is a little later this year, the weather will be just a little warmer and a little less windy, lol. Diana will be checking what supplies we have left from last year and will replenish them. We are hopeful to have more little hunters this year. If you are able to volunteer that morning please see Diana for details. Based on last year, if you can help out signing everyone in or spreading out all the eggs, would be greatly appreciated. We already have almost 20 kids signed up for this event.

Living Word Lutheran Church

EGG

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 3rd

11:30 am

HUNT

Ages 1 to 13

Registration is open!



EASTER LILY ORDER FORMS are in the worship folders starting today. They are due by Sunday, March 27th. Unfortunately though with the price of delivery charges going up due to increasing gas prices, the price for each lily will be \$10.50. If you need to order them just a little bit later than that, you can always see me or call me at the office, I was just trying to eliminate any extra chaos and confusion with the Easter Egg Hunt the following week.



HE IS RISEN! Crosses are available online at EASTERCROSS.ORG. Be a witness to the Risen Christ and stand firm with the community of Christians. Jim McKinney had anonymously ordered some for us last year and we have the info available on the bulletin board, and I will include them as worship folder inserts as well this month. I have looked up the website and the crosses are \$4.00 and the minimum you can order is (2) two.

Important Information

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 their 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 from 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. There is nothing like fellowship time among some of your closest friends that share the same beliefs as you do!

UPDATED MASK MANDATES Following Governor Pritzker's decision to lift the mask mandates on February 28th, starting with our Ash Wednesday service, we will go mask optional. If you prefer to keep your mask on during service, please feel free to do so, however masks will not be required starting in March.

2021 OFFERING STATEMENTS are now available and in the box on the desk located next to the office. Please review carefully and notify us of any discrepancies that you may encounter.

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES are ready and available for you to pick up on Sunday. They are located on the desk next to the office.

Zoom Bible Study

SUNDAY MORNING Bible Study will be on Zoom. We will have a dedicated link every Sunday for the Zoom portion of the class. Going forward, I will email this link to everyone on Fridays, so it would be very easy for you to find the email with the link. Please see me or call the office if you would like to join, we can give you the information that you will need for Zoom. Not only will you gain some insight with these bible study classes, but you will have fun doing so at the same time. **Please see below for the Zoom info for the Bible study on March 6th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85836274027?pwd=UFJDOGU2aStBTG1kMkpTNHBFS0tkUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 3627 4027 Passcode: 410584

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,85836274027#,,,,*410584# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

POW (People of the Word) Bible Study will wrap up their study on the Parables for Lent. We are going back to individual links every Friday for the Zoom portion of the class. I will email the following link to everyone on Thursdays, so it would be very easy for you to find the email with the link in your inbox. 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. They have begun their next study for Lent. "*Surrounded By Grace*" study this past Friday. If you would like to join them, please call Donna or the church, so you can get a book sent out to you. **Please see below for the Zoom info for the Bible study on March 11th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86992050513?pwd=R0dMTFZzSFNnOXMvSmJPZlFBdUVKdz09>

Meeting ID: 869 9205 0513 Passcode: 361676

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,86992050513#,,,,*361676# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

"Living Word Preschool"

A NEED FOR OUR PRESCHOOL AGAIN Please try to help us pass the word about our preschool throughout our community. Now that we are past January and the winter semester, we need to fill our church with the little ones and teach them the love and knowledge of Jesus and prepare them for kindergarten and grade school. Let all your friends and family know that enrollment is open online. We already have one student enrolled and a family just visited us last month. Diana has created fliers and registration forms on our website and has sent them out to past VBS and Easter Egg Hunt families. I know most of us don't have any little ones at home, but if you happen to know of anyone who does, please let them know about our website and that they can come and check out the church and classrooms at anytime.



Stewardship Updates

ATTENDANCE TRACKING Going forward starting with this year, we are trying to keep count of all those who watch the service online. If you could please either sign in with Facebook or very briefly comment at the time that you are watching, and if any are watching with you, we would greatly appreciate it. Also, if you happen to watch it during the week at a more convenient time, please just email us back saying that you had watched, and how many others had watched with you. This way you can get the credit for participating in the service and we can grow our attendance totals in order to reach our endowment fund goals. Thank you for helping us with this effort, again we greatly appreciate any help you can give.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT During these very trying and difficult times, like all of us, the offerings for the church have also been suffering and are below the projected budget. Please help us and come to worship so that we can have better attendance totals and that we can reconnect with each other as we worship together. In doing so, we will be able to reach our goals for the endowment fund. Thank you as always for keeping us moving forward in these times.

DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK *[John the Baptist told his disciples] "He [Jesus] must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less." - John 3:30 (NLT)*

John perfectly pictures the process of Christian growth—surrendering more and more of our will to God and allowing God's will to have more and more control of our thoughts, words, and actions. So how's that going in your life? As we begin the Lenten season, today is a great day to refocus on this process and allow God to be exalted more and more in our lives.

3-6-22 Message Outline

"My Fortress"

Psalm 91 says, "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and fortress, my God, in whom I trust." Today we ask, "Is God MY fortress...?"

1) Is God the Father your Fortress of FIRSTFRUITS?

²⁶ When you have entered the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, ² take some of the firstfruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name ³ and say to the priest in office at the time... ¹⁰ "And now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, LORD, have given me."

Deuteronomy 26:1-3a, 10a

2) Is God the Son your Fortress of FAITH?

⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Romans 10:9-10

3) Is God the Holy Spirit your Fortress of FULLNESS?

⁴ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. ³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" ⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷ If you worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" ⁹ The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; ¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ¹² Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³ When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

Luke 4:1-13

VBS 2022



VBS 2022—CELEBRATING GOD'S GREATNESS Diana has theme for VBS picked out and has already ordered the basic supplies and when it gets closer, and warmer especially, she will have her list of items that she will need for snacks and craft time. Everyone had so much fun here last year, that we already have three kids signed up. Thank you Diana for all of the hard work you put into this program for us and the children of our community. If you can help out a day or two during that week, please see Diana for more information. Even though its only early March, we already have almost 20 kids signed up for it.

Ways to Help Ukraine



HELPING UKRAINE We have received several different emails this past week as to being able to help Ukraine. I felt that I should share them in our newsletter this month. The emails came from the Northern Illinois District and the Lutheran Church Charities respectively.

From the Northern Illinois District:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The violence in Ukraine continues. Those in Ukraine and those fleeing to neighboring countries face great need.

Our Office of International Mission — especially through our Eurasia region and the Rev. James Krikava, the Synod's associate executive director of Eurasia and Asia Operations — is working with partner churches, missionaries and others in Europe to help care for those fleeing Ukraine. Krikava has been working with Bishop Serge Maschewski of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine (ELCU) to assist the people of the ELCU who remain in Ukraine, including pastors who continue to care for people.

Please encourage your congregations to pray for Ukraine. You can also [share with them the following story](#), which includes opportunities for giving to this necessary work.

As we repent and join together in meditation about our Savior's precious death and resurrection, we also pray for and care for all those for whom Christ died and rose.

Here's the email below from Lutheran Church Charities along with the pictures on the following page.

Urgent financial assistance is needed for women, children, and the elderly as able men stay to defend the Ukrainian homeland. Lutheran Church Charities IS WORKING WITH the **Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC)** and the **Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA)** to support those staying in Ukraine as well as those fleeing to other countries during these desperate and challenging times. LCC will BE WORKING with Christian Ukrainian families here in the United States that have families in Ukraine or who are displaced in Poland.

The Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC) and its 18 national pastors spiritually lead and serve 2,500 members, 24 established congregations, and 12 mission congregations in Ukraine by sharing the hope of the gospel with others around them who do not know Christ. They are committed to remaining in Ukraine to help their fellow Ukrainians who choose to stay in their homeland survive during these horrific conditions.

The Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA) connect with outreach-minded congregations to welcome and support refugees fleeing to the United States. With the current Ukrainian crisis, they are prepared to support an increased need to help these individuals and families who come to the United States, often with little or no possessions, establish a new life.

Ways to Help Ukraine



ST. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH sent out a posting this week, they are collecting the following items at their church located at 8410 W. 131st Street in Palos Park. You can drop the items off anytime outside their doors. The list includes:

- First aid kits
- Over the counter pain relievers
- Kids fever reducer
- Band aids
- Sleeping bags
- Thermal underwear
- Flashlights (no batteries)
- Socks
- Female products
- Diapers
- Cold Medicines
- Face Masks
- Antiseptics
- Antibiotics ointments
- Bandages
- Refillable water bottles
- Walkie-talkies
- Backpacks
- Gloves
- Hygiene items
- Razors
- Gauze
- Latex Gloves
- Eye Protection