



IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

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"In What Way was John the Baptist the Greatest?"

In a discourse about John the Baptist, Jesus honored the prophet with these words: "Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist". John certainly did not see himself as "great"—he did not see himself as worthy enough to baptize Jesus or even to carry His sandals (Matthew 3:11).

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The "greatness" that Jesus refers to concerning John has to do with John's unique position in history, not with any special talent, holiness, or personal merit. In fact, immediately after stating that John is the greatest "among those born of women," Jesus says, "Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he". More on this paradox later.

One reason that Jesus called John the Baptist the "greatest" was that John held the honor of being chosen by God as the forerunner to the Messiah. John's mission was to personally prepare the world for Christ's arrival. John's ministry was predicted. After Jesus came, John introduced Him to the world as the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. John was the herald who introduced to the world the Hero of all history. It was this introduction that accredited Jesus before the Jewish crowds and leaders, some of whom believed on Jesus, and many of whom did not.

John was also the "greatest" in that he preached with the power of Elijah. John shared many qualities with Elijah, including calling a nation to repentance, rebuking the king, and persevering in the face of public misunderstanding and malicious persecution.

John was also the "greatest" in that God had chosen him to break the 430 years of divine silence that had existed since the prophet Malachi. John was the Spirit-anointed bridge from the Old Testament to the New. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets and stood on the cusp of a new dispensation. His preaching was the end of the Law and the beginning of the Promise. He was the last in the long line of prophets who predicted Christ, yet he was the only one who could actually see Christ in the flesh. Moses, Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets had pointed to a far-distant personage they could see only faintly. John pointed at an actual human being who stood directly in front of him. No other prophet had that privilege.

Jesus' full statement in Matthew 11:11 is paradoxical: "Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." How can John be the greatest, if even the "least in the kingdom" is greater than John? Again, the answer has to do with the Christian's unique position in history, not with his personal merit. John died without seeing the fullness of God's plan in Christ. John never saw the crucifixion of Christ or His glorious resurrection. Yet even the "least in the kingdom of heaven" knows of these events and understands their meaning.

The baptism of John was insufficient to save. The disciples of John in Ephesus needed to hear the whole gospel, not just what John had taught. They needed to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, the one John had predicted. They needed the baptism of the Holy Spirit. John was truly the greatest prophet of his era—the Old Testament time—yet all Christians today have a fuller perspective on the work of Christ.

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

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
9:15 am Adult study
10:00 am Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship LWLC Pre-school Christmas Program	12 Tot Time 9:30am-11:00am 	13 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	14 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	15 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	16 9:30am POW Bible Study Zoom and Living Word	17

This Week's Celebrations



Dec 17 Eleanor Galik
Dec 17 Jennifer Lange

Church Contacts

Church Contacts
 intouchlwc@yahoo.com

Ministry Support Coordinator, Diana Motel
 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

December 4th

16 Worshipped, 16 Communed
2 DVD
11 Watched Online
39 Total

Financial Support

1,322.00	General Offering Deposit
200.00	Townhome Board Meeting Building Use
150.00	Cook County Board Building Use
1,672.00	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.

Devotional Time

Opportunities to Connect with God

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 visit our website to send in your prayer request, 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 9:30 a.m. Sundays on 1580 AM

DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK *I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. - John 10:16 (NLT)*

We are in a spiritual war. Our only source of direction is our Shepherd's voice. Whether the listening is easy or hard, whether the obedience is easy or hard, whether just believing is easy or hard, we must continue to listen for our Savior's voice and follow His direction, for He loves us even to the point of giving His life.

Preschool News

PLASTIC GALLON JUGS are needed for our preschool. Mrs. Diana will be creating the arctic in her Dramatic Arts Play Area in January, and she is asking for all your empty plastic gallon jugs. They can be from certain orange juices, fruit punches, water, apple cider or milk. The boxes are set up outside of the sanctuary once again since election day is over. So you can still drop them off anytime you are here. She has over 450 already, most of them from The Well Coffee Shop in Manteo. If you ever happen to be in that area, please stop by and tell them thank you from Living Word and let them know that we are trying to support them for all of their help that they are offering to Diana and her class. She is hoping to have about 400 or better by the beginning of January, so help her fill up those boxes and bags with these bottles. As always thank you for all of your help and donations for preschool as they build the arctic, lol.

PRECHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM is returning to our worship service again today. They have been practicing real hard. They will be performing 4 songs for us. It will be a perfect time to connect with the preschool families as they are so amazed with our preschool, hopefully they can see what a wonderful church and fellowship our congregation is. If anyone can help donate some goodies and light refreshments for after the worship service. We are expecting over additional preschool families, it will be so joyous for us to share worship and fellowship with them. As you can see below, they are definitely happy while they are getting ready for Christmas.



Living Word News

DON'T FORGET TO remember when doing gift card shopping this upcoming holiday season to use the app and/or website that Diana had set up for us last year 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. If you need help setting this up, just let Diana know and she can help you set it up, and she will also have all of this up on our website and Facebook page, and once the account gets set up, our unique code to use in order for the 3% is **YL5M6W4APYDX**. This is the most safe and secure way to buy gift cards these days, Still be as generous as you always are, just be aware to do it safely and securely, and help raise extra cash for us. So as you are starting some of your Christmas shopping this year, stay nice and warm at home and do it from your phone or laptop and have the gift card company donate the 3% back to Living Word.

AMAZON SMILE will also donate some of the proceeds to our church when using that feature on their website. All you have to do is put Living Word into their search field or click on the link from our website and you can start doing your shopping. We all know how much we spend with Amazon, lol. Every little bit can go a long way for our church and our future. Happy shopping with both of these opportunities.



When - Monday, January 24th

From - 9:30 am - 11 am

Calling all tots! Living Word Lutheran Church in Orland Park is excited to announce a fun once a month program for 2 to 4 year olds. Children will get to play in a special themed area, make a craft and hear a story. Registration is required and closes 72 hours before the event. A parent or caregiver is required to stay for this program.

Thank you to [Living Word Lutheran Church - Orland Park](#) for your very generous donation to the Orland Township Holiday Program! Together, the Parish was able to collect nearly two cart loads full of toys to contribute after organizing their own Giving Tree to support the program. We're happy to have such kind and caring people in Orland Township.

ORLAND PARK FOOD PANTRY and the Village of Orland Park was the Mission of the Month for part of November and December. We filled the angel tree in the fellowship hall with stockings and angels with ideas of what is needed and gathered all sorts of goodies under the tree. Even some of the preschool families donated items and gifts for the families of Orland Park. Diana filled up her "sleigh" with the help from her Dad, they took everything to the Village. They were very grateful for all of the items that we brought over to them. We are once again mentioned on their Facebook page and their website. As always, thank you for your support and donations. You have helped a lot of families in need to have a much more merrier Christmas than what they would of had. We leaving the angels and stockings on the tree as ornaments for the remainder of the season, lol.



THANK YOU, LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH

DECEMBER MISSION OF MONTH is LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH! After helping so many other organizations and communities, we are going to help ourselves for the rest of this last month of the year. We would like to build up the designated funds and to help the General fund so we be able to afford our regular bills, as

we too are noticing rising costs of everything. And also to be able to afford a new pastor. Along with these financial obligations, there are a few things that still need to be fixed and maintained. We are very thankful for the efforts of all of our members, you have been so great these past few trying years. So whatever you normally are able to give to all of the missions every month, our mission is to be able to exist and stay afloat and also considering calling a new pastor. Thank you for all that you do for our church!



“Set Free!”

Psalms 146 says: “The Lord sets prisoners free.”

The coming of Jesus means we are set free...!

1) **Jesus’ coming sets me free from all FEAR.**

⁴ Say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.”
Isaiah 35:4

2) **Jesus’ coming sets me free to stand firm like a FARMER.**

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.
James 5:7-8

3) **Jesus’ coming sets me free by—and for—the FIGHT.**

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. ² When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” ⁴ Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.” ⁷ As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.” ¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ Whoever has ears, let them hear.
Matthew 11:1-15

“Sunday Zoom Bible Study Classes”

SUNDAY MORNING Bible Study will be on Zoom. We will have a dedicated link every Sunday for the Zoom portion of the class. I will email this link to everyone on Fridays, so it would be very easy for you to find the email with the link. 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 December 11th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82672012090?pwd=NFITVEpMM3pqOFY0bWZXMzhDSzFrQT09>

Meeting ID: 826 7201 2090 Passcode: 827812

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,82672012090#,,,,*827812# US (Chicago)

“Friday Zoom Bible Study Classes”

POW (People of the Word) Advent Bible Study, “It’s a Wonderful Life” will conclude next Friday. The group will be taking a break for a few months. As they decide upon their next study, I will have information in the newsletter. I will email the following link to everyone on Thursdays. All you have to do is click on the link and it will connect you to the group. **Please see below for the Zoom info for the Bible study on December 16th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88665978251?pwd=UDFxUy9YRUVXZXdoNVNGcDIDOXBjQT09>

Meeting ID: 886 6597 8251 Passcode: 085120

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,88665978251#,,,,*085120# US (Chicago)