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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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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

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

IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 31, Issue 49

December 18, 2022

"He Is a God of Restoration"

Whatever life has taken from you, God can restore. He may not give you exactly what you want, but He will give you what is best. Even when you fall under His corrective hand through disobedience, if you repent, He will reinstate you to a place of blessing. You say, 'But what about the time I've wasted, the opportunities I've squandered, and the mess I've made of my life? Sometimes I wonder if I've fallen so low that even God cannot reach me.' No, there's hope for you.


The Bible says, **'Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear' (Isaiah 59:1).** After wasting all that he'd inherited from his father, the Prodigal Son returned home, penniless and embarrassed. All he wanted was three square meals and a job in the servants' quarters. But the moment he said, **'Forgive me,'** his father called for the best robe, the fattest cow, the newest shoes, and a ring of son-ship restoring him to his rightful place as a member of the family. Even under the crushing weight of the Old Testament law, with demands that no one could live up to, God said, **'If a man steals an ox or a sheep...he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep' (Exodus 22:1).** Now if God would do that for those who lived under the law and on the wrong side of the cross, how much more will He do for those He has redeemed? So you can go to Him today with confidence, knowing He's a God of restoration.

One day the Amalekites swept down on King David's home town, burning it to the ground and taking its families captive. In this scene of devastation, David and his men **'lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep' (1 Samuel 30:4).** Now, God will let you grieve your losses because that's healthy, but He won't allow you to stay there too long. So God said to David, **'Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all' (v. 8).** Did David and his men get back everything they had lost? Yes, and much more besides, for our God is not only a God of restoration but a God of abundance. You say, 'I feel so ashamed of the years I have wasted.' The God Who created time can give you more of it. **'I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten...the consuming locust... You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the Name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall never be put to shame' (Joel 2:25-26).** Notice the word, **'plenty'.** When God blesses you, it will not come from an eyedropper or from a rationed supply. No, you'll be able to sing, **'His love hath no limit; His grace hath no measure, His power no boundary known unto men. For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.'** Ever since Adam and Eve 'blew it' in Eden, God's desire and plan has been to restore to us all that we have lost. So come to Him today and let the restoration begin.


Are you saying, 'If only I hadn't said, or done...?' You're not unique; we all have our regrets. But God wants us to learn from them, not live in them. **'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.'** Jesus wore the crown of thorns so you could wear the crown of righteousness, and be in right standing with God. **'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Romans 5:1).** Being justified gives you the right to stand before God and claim His best. Is your business struggling or failing? Peter the fisherman experienced that too. So Jesus, the Restorer, said to him: **"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."** But Simon answered and said to Him, **"Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."** And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink' (Luke 5:4-7). Just one word from Jesus, and you can go from the threshold of bankruptcy to adding a second boat. Jesus actually gave Peter back more than he lost. So the word for today is, 'Believe for more than you expected, because our God is a God of restoration.'

This Week at Living Word

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship-COMM	19	20 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer 7:00pm Council Meeting	21 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool First Day of Winter	22 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool Christmas Party	23	24 6:00pm Christmas Eve Candle-light Service 

This Week's Celebrations



Happy Baptism Birthday!

Dec 18 Carolyn Wagenaar

Stewardship Snapshot

December 11th

73 Worshipped

2 DVD

14 Watched Online

89 Total

Financial Support

\$2,245.00 General Fund Offering 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

Church Contacts

intouchlwlc@yahoo.com

Ministry Support Coordinator, Diana Motel

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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

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 *When [Jesus] said these things, the people were again divided in their opinions about him. - John 10:19 (NLT)*

Often we are divided in our opinion of what God is saying to us. On the one hand, it may resonate with us as being a true reflection of what is going on in our lives. On the other hand, it may challenge or even scare us as we are unsure of what God will lead us into next. Resolve today to cultivate a greater trust that God knows what is best, both for you and for His kingdom, and get ready to follow where he leads.

FRIENDLY REMINDER for the Friday morning Adult Bible class, this past Friday was their last session for not only this year, but until the summer. I will have more updates from time to time regarding different study topics and as to when the group will resume meeting on Fridays again.

Preschool Christmas Program

PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM entertained their families and our members here during service last Sunday. They were wonderful, of course. They performed four songs for us and as you can see they had a blast doing them. The four songs were Jingle Bells, It's Christmas, Reindeer Hokey and This Little Light of Mine. Before their performance, Pastor Lee did a Children's message with the preschoolers and their siblings and cousins about our Advent Wreath and the candles, and how Baby Jesus is our present. After the performance, Mrs. Diana had Children's Church with all of them. It was so good to have such a full church again. During fellowship time after service, Mrs. Diana and a few others had a big spread for all of us, there were cookies, brownie bites and coffee cake. Everybody looked like they had a real nice time sitting down and sharing the refreshments with family and friends and meeting and talking with new friends. Our preschoolers included Teddy DiLallo, Gabriella Hough, Jackson Palmer, Callie Pericht and Arianna Saso, and of course, our very own Diana Motel as their teacher, you can tell what a great job she has done so far with them this year. It has been wonderful having the little ones here again after a whole year of the preschool being closed.



Preschool News

FALL SEMESTER is wrapping up quickly, and preschool has grown from four students at the start of September and then with the youngest student, Callie starting in October, we had five. On last Tuesday, Diana had a tour with a mom and her son Ryan, and over the weekend the mom contacted her back to let us know that she will be registering her son for the winter semester when they all come back to school in January. All but two of the students are three and four, it will be so wonderful to see them return in the fall. Plus Diana has messaged a couple of families that have been here for VBS and the Easter Egg Hunt that have younger children that has turned three this year, so hopefully we might be able to get one or two more students before too long.

Living Word News

COUNCIL MEETING is scheduled for this coming Tuesday, the 20th. They will be receiving updates from the Transition team along with the financial updates, plus discussing preschool, alarm systems and the security cameras and discussing resolutions regarding the issues of low attendance at voter's congregational meeting. There will be updates and announcements at the end of the service on Christmas Eve and the council meeting notes will be in next week's newsletter. Please keep in touch with us or keep reading the newsletters every week for very important information regarding updates, what meetings will be scheduled we need everyone's participation and input for the future of our church. Also keep checking our website and look for any **IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ EMAILS** that I will be sending out from time to time regarding important information about meetings and updates.



TOT TIME was Monday, the kids had a fun time making snowmen with their crafts that Mrs. Diana had for them, plus they were able to make the 3D snowmen in the Dramatic Arts Play Area. This outreach program has been very successful. Two of the families have been here for all 3 Tot Times now, plus we keep getting some new ones too every month. You can pretty much guess what will be the star attraction at Tot Time in January. The room is full of milk jugs that will all be glued together and all of our little "Eskimos" will have a giant igloo to play in, lol.

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.

PRESCHOOL INDOOR FUN was a great time for all of our preschoolers on Thursday morning. Mrs. Diana had "snowballs" for them. As you can see below and on the bottom of page 6, they loved ganging up on her with all the snowballs, lol.



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!



Other Earning Opportunities

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.

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!

KITCHEN ITEMS are needed. We are starting to run real low on coffee. If you would like to help out and grab an extra can of coffee when you are doing your grocery shopping, we would greatly appreciate it. As always, thank you for all of your donations that you so generously have given to us this past year.

“Vindication”

“Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god. They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior.”
Psalm 24:3-5

1) God’s PROPHETS were vindicated.

The Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

2) God’s PROMISES have been vindicated.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name’s sake. ⁶ And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. Romans 1:1-6

3) God’s PEOPLE are vindicated!

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. Matthew 1:18-25

“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 18th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84212331564?pwd=QkovMFFZdGwyMmJ5TmV3K01HYWRWdz09>

Meeting ID: 842 1233 1564 Passcode: 692840

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