



IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 32, Issue 2

January 8, 2023

"The Magi—The Traditions and Importance"

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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

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

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

Magi, singular **Magus**, also called **Wise Men**, in Christian tradition, the noble pilgrims "from the East" who followed a miraculous guiding star to Bethlehem, where they paid homage to the infant Jesus as king of the Jews (Matthew 2:1–12). Christian theological tradition has always stressed that Gentiles as well as Jews came to worship Jesus—an event celebrated in the Eastern church at Christmas and in the West at Epiphany (January 6). Eastern tradition sets the number of Magi at 12, but Western tradition sets their number at three, probably based on the three gifts of "gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11) presented to the infant.

The Gospel According to Matthew relates how at Jerusalem the Magi attracted the interest of King Herod I of Judaea by announcing Jesus' birth: "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage" (Matthew 2:2). Having already learned the place of Jesus' birth from the priests and scribes, Herod extracted from the Magi the exact date on which the star heralding the birth appeared as confirmation of the biblical prophecy. He then sent them to see the infant Jesus, requesting that they disclose upon their return his exact location. They continued on to Bethlehem, where they worshipped Jesus and offered him gifts. Warned in a dream not to return to Herod, "they left for their own country by another road" (Matthew 2:12). The ensuing massacre of young male children in Bethlehem by Herod in an attempt to kill the infant Jesus is commemorated on the Feast of the Holy Innocents.

Subsequent traditions embellished the narrative. As early as the 3rd century they were considered to be kings, probably interpreted as the fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalms 72:11 ("May all kings fall down before him"). In about the 8th century the names of three Magi—Bithisarea, Melchior, and Gathaspa—appear in a chronicle known as the *Excerpta latina barbari*. They have become known most commonly as Balthasar, Melchior, and Gaspar (or Casper). According to Western church tradition, Balthasar is often represented as a king of Arabia or sometimes Ethiopia, Melchior as a king of Persia, and Gaspar as a king of India. The three are often venerated as saints and martyrs, and their supposed relics were transferred from Constantinople (modern Istanbul), possibly in the late 5th century, to Milan and thence to Cologne Cathedral in the 12th century. Devotion to the Magi was especially fervent in the Middle Ages, and they are some of the patron saints of travelers.

The Adoration of the Magi—i.e., their homage to the infant Jesus—early became one of the most popular themes in Christian art, the first extant painting on the subject being the fresco in the Priscilla Catacomb of Rome dating from the 2nd century. In the Middle Ages the Adoration of the Magi was often associated with two other major events of Jesus' life: his baptism, during which the voice of God publicly declared Jesus to be his son, and the wedding at Cana, at which he revealed his divinity by changing water into wine. The three events, commonly celebrated on the same feast day, were frequently represented together in the monumental sculptures that decorated the churches of the period.

Epiphany, or Three Kings' Day, is commonly celebrated as the last of the Twelve Days of Christmas in Western Christianity. The Magi are memorialized with special pastries in many countries, often with a toy Baby Jesus hidden inside. Having left a bowl of water and some grass or other vegetation for the Magi's camels the night before, children awaken to small gifts in their shoes in honor of the Magi's gifts to the infant.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship Congregational Meeting	9	10 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	11 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	12 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	13	14

Stewardship Snapshot

January 1st

19 Worshipped, **19** Communed
2 DVD
11 Watched Online
32 Total

Financial Support for January 1st

\$1,100.00 General Fund Offering Deposit

Financial Support for December 25th

\$5,455.00 General Fund Offering Deposit

Financial Support for December 24th

\$900.00 General Fund Offering Deposit

Church Contacts

Church Contacts

intouchlwlc@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

January Celebrations



Jan 8 Brad Kempke
Jan 12 Joan Fraser



Jan 8 John Paul Lange

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 *But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."* - John 11:4 (NLT)

When we are suffering, it is harder to wait to see how God is working, to trust that He is working even in the midst of our suffering. May God increase our faith during this new year so that we can trust Him in all things, and through all things.

LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 12/31/2022)

The current value of the fund is \$151,277.20 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$16,894.31. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$49,402.16. Of this, \$24,701.08 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	16,894.31
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>49,402.16</u>
	Total market value	\$151,277.20



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

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!

ATTENDANCE TRACKING Going forward, continuing from last 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.

A THANK YOU CALL AND EMAIL was received from Tom Tews at Lutheran Church Charities this week. It reads, "Dear Members of Living Word, I am writing to say "thank you" for your August gift to Lutheran Church Charities. God uses your gift in miraculous ways to shine the light of His love in Jesus on people who are experiencing the most challenging times of life. "THANK YOU!" for moving God's ministry into the future. If you have a prayer request, please respond to this email, and I will gladly pray. I will pray that God will bless your voter's meeting on Sunday, that the Holy Spirit will lead you to hear His voice leading you, even if it His still small voice, so that you can fulfill all He calls you to do in His kingdom work. God bless you abundantly and mightily in the New Year so that Satan continues to discover that no obstacle he throws in your path will deter from following His call for you.. Gods' peace and joy be with you." Signed: Tom. The full email is posted on the bulletin board adjacent to the office.

Preschool News

TOT TIME for January will be on Monday, January 23rd. 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. One of the families have shown interest in our preschool as well. We already have 5 tots signed up for this month. Please let everyone you know that has tots to sign up for this great event. You can pretty much guess what will be the star attraction at Tot Time this coming month. The spare storage room was full of milk jugs that was all glued together and all of our little "Eskimos" will have a giant igloo to play in.



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.

WINTER SEMESTER will be starting on January 10th, and we will have a new student starting the next day. Ryan will be coming here 2 days a week. All but two of the students are three and four years old, it will be so wonderful to see them return next fall and we just received a call last week from one of Diana's friends, she will be registering her little girl for next year. 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. Diana will be opening up registration within this month to the current students and their families, and then enrollment will be opened up to the rest of the community by the end of this month or in February. Please help us spread the word about our wonderful program that Diana has been working so hard on all year, it would be great to have even more students next year.

Living Word News

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING is today, January 8th. The below flyer will be mailed out to all voting members and I have emailed out reminders and invitations this week. The meeting will basically be to vote on if we should extend the call to Pastor Dubensky and hope that Christ Lutheran will be able to partner with us going forward. We need everyone's participation, input and vote for the future of our church. Once again, there will be a separate link that I will email out to everyone that you will need to click on once the service is over. Voting will be open till the following Wednesday.

Special **VOTERS' MEETING**



Sunday
January 8, 2023 at 11:00am

"All Kings and Nations"

Psalms 72 says: *"May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him."* On Epiphany Sunday we echo Solomon's prayer...

1) We pray all people see Christ's LIGHT.

³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn... ⁶And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord. Isaiah 60:3, 6b

2) We pray all people receive Christ's LOVE.

⁸Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. Ephesians 3:8-9

3) We pray all people bow before Christ's LORDSHIP.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." ⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. Matthew 2:1-12

Mission of the Month



JANUARY MISSION OF MONTH is Phil's Friends, it was founded by Phil Zielke who was diagnosed with cancer twice and found hope in Christ, since then he has been helping others with cancer find hope and encouragement. We have made cards and boxes for them in the past. Please help us once again to supply them extra sets of hands to make up their care packages that they send to cancer patients. We will have more information in the coming weeks as to the specific needs, but just your normal generosity is all Phil's Friends really need to help spread the Word about hope and prayer.

"Sunday Zoom Bible Study Class"

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 January 8th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81040141416?pwd=TFAYbjdZUnVBb3F2ajhJS21BV1ZjQT09>

Meeting ID: 810 4014 1416 Passcode: 362669

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,81040141416#,,,,*362669# US (Chicago)