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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

# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 32, Issue 18

April 30, 2023

## "The Good Shepherd"

These Sundays after Easter we are continuously confronted with the irreducible core of our faith, namely that Jesus died and rose from the dead.

Easter faith is a faith in Jesus as a personal savior; a faith that compels the Christian to believe in Jesus, the Christ, as one whose words can be believed and whose deeds can be imitated. It is that same easter faith that becomes the criteria for authentic discipleship. And so it remains. As Christians we are called to stand before the world—in our time and space—as witnesses to the resurrection and as a sign that God lives. It is Easter faith that allows us to come to know Jesus, to experience the power of the resurrection and to serve as a vital force energizing the believer's words, actions and relationships. Easter faith also shows us the attitude with which we should live our life. That is to say, we should be a forward looking people; we should have a hope filled attitude as we go about living and experiencing the unique challenges that are each of ours.

The Resurrection and the evolution of the young Christian communities clearly illustrates that the past is not something to cling to. In St. Luke's account of the resurrection we hear the words: "Do not seek the living among the dead. Jesus is not here, he has gone before you." Do not look for the vitality and relevance of your faith, the strength of your faith, in the past. Your image of god changes; your faith life evolves; your prayer life deepens; hence your understanding of the church should not be limited to your past experiences of it.

The American church is presently confronting challenges on multiple fronts. It is evolving and we must seek the hope-filled grace to change with it. We must make these graced/learning moments for all of us. Easter tells us to look to the present not the past; look to the living, suffering community where Jesus is active. Our focus should be the church of today that is being born anew and afresh with every celebration of easter, even amidst scandals and public policy debates. Our Easter faith thrusts us, hope filled, into the future. Finally, the Easter Jesus teaches us how to live with confidence.

The resurrection is the fence around the life of the Christian. You cannot fall off if you believe; the resurrection is our barrier against death and the incentive to live. And that brings us to today's gospel: the beautiful image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. In that image is captured the essence of a god who is loving, caring, and faithful; a God who loves us, each of us, enough to die for us. That is a powerful testimony of Jesus' commitment to each of us. The shepherd imagery is deeply rooted in biblical thought. God is the ultimate shepherd of the people, providing guidance, sustenance and protection; the kings, priests and leaders of Israel were also to be shepherds of their people. And the designation 'good' for Jesus contrasts with the frequent designation of unfaithful leaders in scripture as 'bad' shepherds, who abuse and neglect their flock.

But Jesus is different; "he has come to feed us, to protect us, to guide us and to love us." Jesus assures us that just as the shepherd and sheep have a familiar relationship so Jesus has an intimate bond with his followers. In this tender relationship we, too, have the opportunity to come to know Jesus more deeply and to develop a deeper relationship. Sometimes, in the midst of fear and sadness, it is extremely difficult to believe this. But what was offered to the fearful disciples (in the accounts of the past weeks), is offered to us today: boundless hope in the face of suffering, boundless confidence in the midst of turmoil, and boundless love in the midst of fear. The Christ who rose on Easter morning to astonish and comfort the disciples is the same Christ who is with us today in our own struggles, always offering us the Easter miracle of hope.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1  5:00 pm Transition Team Meeting with Pastor Arthur	2 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	3 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	4 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	5	6
7 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship-COMM	8	9 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool  10:00am Push Prayer	10 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	11 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	12	13
14 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship  Mother's Day 	15 Tot Time 9:30am-11:00am 	16 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool  10:00am Push Prayer	17 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	18 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool Last Day of School  7:00pm Council Meeting	19	20
21 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship Preschool Graduation 	22	23 10:00am Push Prayer	24	25	26	27
28 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship	29 Memorial Day Office Closed 	30 10:00am Push Prayer	31			



## May Celebrations

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**May 4** Daniel M.  
**May 8** Cathy B.  
**May 12** Diane C.  
**May 13** Bob G.  
**May 20** Anne L.  
**May 28** Brian M.  
**May 30** Deanna M.  
**May 30** Joshua R.



**May 9** Shawn R.  
**May 11** Ethel H.  
**May 12** Diana M.  
**May 13** Paxton H.

Happy Anniversary



**May 9** Steve & Eileen R.

## Stewardship Snapshot

**April 23rd**

**28 Worshipped**

**8 Watched Online**

**36 Total**

**Financial Support**

\$3,170.00 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

### Church Contacts

[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

## 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** [Jesus said] "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." - John 13:35 (NLT)

We are not very lovable, and we are not willing to love others, at least not the sacrificial way Jesus intends, except by the grace of God. So our love for others will be a living demonstration of the power of God at work within us. It is also a way we can monitor our own closeness to God; as we find our love diminishing, we can know that it is time to reconnect to God so that more of His grace can flow to and through us.

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS** is every Sunday morning at 9:15am in the conference room. Join Pastor Lee, Pastor John and the others as they review the Word of the our Lord.

## Greetings

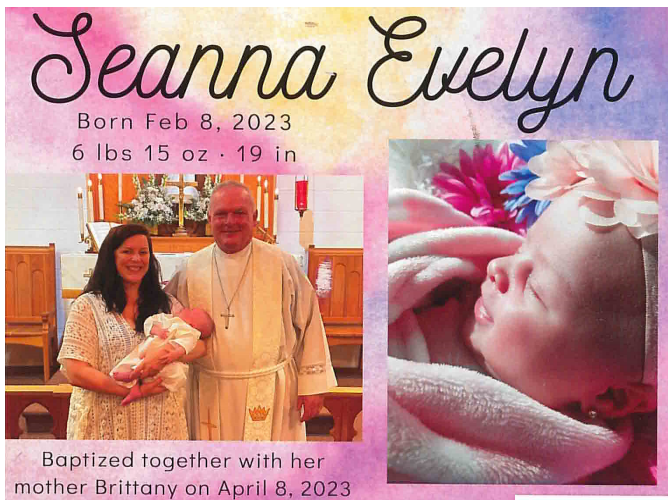
**A THANK YOU CARD** was received from Barb and Jerry Erjavec this week. It reads: "With thanks and gratitude for over 20 years of love and caring. God's blessings always. Barbara and Jerry Erjavec"

**OUR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS** will have a new friend stating in September. The family that came to the Preschool Open House a couple of weeks ago, registered their daughter Lucy for 2 days a week. She will turn 3 years old in September. If you haven't done so already, please share our Preschool Facebook page with all your social media friends and family. Diana just saw on Facebook that Parkview and Immanuel Lutheran will be closing their preschools due to Governor Pritzker signing the Free Public Schools Preschool bill. We highly doubt that the public schools will be able to handle such a large number of preschool students all at once. I will be reaching out to both Parkview and Immanuel hoping they will be able to pass our information along to their families and members giving them an option for a Christian Early Childhood Education Program. Diana still has a few more spots available. It would be a wonderful problem to have to wither start looking for an aid or to have a waiting list.

**Our current students** have been very busy this week. They are starting to practice walking into the sanctuary for graduation which will be May 21st. They also had fun making bird houses which they were able to bring home and bird feeders which they hung up outside in our tree in the front of the church as you walk in, so make sure to check out the birds as they enjoy their new treats. In fact, just moments after they hung their bird feeders in the tree, I spotted 2 cardinals enjoying their food. They also have been learning about veterinarians who take care of our animals. They have some new plants on the window sill, they all guessed which would bloom first. The other craft project this week was in honor of Earth Day which was last Saturday. They each made the planet Earth with a heart on each one.



**LUTHERAN CHURCH CHARITIES** has been the mission of the month for April. Today is the last day we will be collecting for them. Even though we are very familiar with all the work they do and how compassionately they use the Word to comfort and console others, LCC is always expanding their mercy and good work in many different ways, from helping clean up after natural disasters to comforting those who have suffered and endured tremendous losses.



**MAY MISSION OF THE MONTH** will be Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries in honor of Mother's Day of course. Here is the newest member of their family. It is so enriching to see how RLOM can help women in their greatest time of need and to ensure the babies have a chance to be baptized and have a brighter future than what they may have. Please join with me in keeping them in our prayers for a very healthy and God like future. I will have more information regarding their new Illinois home in East Dundee. They have been working real hard in renovating the property. They just recently had their Advocates Meeting this past week, spreading awareness of the renovations for their new maternity home. Hopefully we will not be the only ones helping them with their goals. It will be so beneficial to women in Illinois to have a safe haven for them and their children.

## Council Meeting Notes

Living Word Lutheran Church

Council Meeting Notes

Tuesday, April 20, 2023 at 7pm

Attendees: Diana M, Pastor John, Bill M, Neal H, Paul H, and Bob G

Meeting opened at 7:19pm with prayer from Pastor John

The first topic was financials from Bob. We started the month with \$76,000 and ended with \$71,000 due to paying our insurance in full to have a discount. Neal talked to Carolyn, and she said to just put her \$500 donation into wherever the church needs it. Neal also has tried to get in touch with the Parker family with no response. It was motioned by Bob that we put the \$500 from Carolyn and the \$500 from the Parkers into the fund for a pastor being a total of \$1,000. It was seconded by Pastor John and approved unanimously. Bob will reach out to Donna and ask what she would like to do with the remaining money that she donated for the painting. The council approved the money be moved wherever she would like it moved to. It was noted that it would most likely also be added to the fund to pay for a pastor.

Diana then let the council know that they had one person come for the preschool open house and the family plans to sign their daughter up for preschool this fall. She turns 3 a week after we start. We also should have enough money in the account for the remaining of this school semester.

Bob updated the council about where the transition team is doing. The transition team had two pastors that they were talking to. One is in Minnesota, and one is Louisiana. Bob was later informed by the pastor in Minnesota that he is not going to proceed with us as he already has two other calls.

Diana did inform the council that we have been having some water back-ups in the bathrooms and in the kitchen. Neal was going to have his friends come out and look at it, which they did on Saturday morning. We also have been having a lot of ants. Diana did buy ant traps and Ed put down some stuff around the outside of the building.

We are waiting for a quote from Anderson Windows and will talk about getting the windows replaced in the preschool room and other classroom as they are all bad. Neal has also gotten a quote from Window World already.

Lastly Bill brought up maybe having people do the readings during service. Neal said he would talk to Pastor Lee.

Meeting Adjourned with prayer by Diana at 8:27pm

**“Comforted”**

Psalm 23: “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” Our Good Shepherd “comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” (2 Cor. 1:4) ...

**1) A good shepherd steadfastly CONTINUES to comfort.**

<sup>42</sup>They devoted [Greek: “were steadfastly continuing”] themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... <sup>44</sup>All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup>They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup>Every day they continued [“were steadfastly continuing”] to meet... Acts 2:42, 44-46a

**2) A good shepherd’s comforting work is COMMENDABLE.**

<sup>19</sup>For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. <sup>20</sup>But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. <sup>21</sup>To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup>“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” <sup>23</sup>When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup>“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” <sup>25</sup>“You were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:19-25

**3) Our Good Shepherd CAME & CALLS us to His comfort.**

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them. <sup>7</sup>Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:1-10

**VBS 2023**

VBS 2023 will be out of this world. She had only posted her flyer early last month and we already have over 30 kids signed up for it. She already placed her order for the different items that are needed, and they came in last week. It will be a good month or two before we will get a supply list that is needed and we will have a more definite number of kids that will be registered by then. We are also always on the lookout for volunteers for that week also, it doesn’t have to be the whole week, but if you have a little time to spare on a given day, just let Diana know.

