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IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 33, Issue 4

January 28, 2024

"God's Praise Lasts Forever"

Here are five reasons to be inspired by this psalm:

Be inspired to give thanks with your whole heart.

I love the way the psalmist gives thanks with ALL of his heart. This is no weak mumble of thanks out of habit or duty, but a whole-hearted, shout-out-loud whoop of thanks that sets the tone for the entire psalm. It's as if the psalmist's heart is so full of thanks that he can't contain it, that it wells up from his inner being and releases a flood of words that turns into this psalm. Yes, I'm thankful for many wonderful gifts—for this new day after a good night's sleep, for people who love me, for faith and forgiveness, for food and home and physical safety, and so much more. Yet the cares of this world press in from around the globe and close at hand, there's a part of my heart that still feels heavy. I'm carrying lament today even as I give thanks. And yet for me, this psalm still inspires, for it helps me look beyond what is happening in the world to what God is doing. "The works of the Lord are magnificent". "The Lord is full of mercy and compassion". "God's handiwork is honesty and justice". Even when I have good reason to lament, I also have good reason to give thanks.

Be inspired to give thanks to God.

For the psalmist, giving thanks is clearly addressed to God. This is no vague sentiment directed to no one in particular. The psalmist knows God as "the Lord", who "sent redemption for his people". As part of God's covenant people, the psalmist is already in relationship with God and expresses his thanks in a personal way. It's been quite some time since I've written a psalm of thanks to God, as I haven't been writing much poetry lately. But I still keep a **gratitude journal**, sometimes **varying the format** to keep things interesting. I like to include thanks to people too, but the psalmist reminds me of the primacy of giving thanks to God.

Be inspired to reflect on all God's works.

Psalm 111 is just 10 verses, and the core of the psalm from verses 2-9 is a litany of God's "wondrous works": righteousness, mercy, and compassion (verses 3-4); providing food (verse 5); establishing his people (verses 6, 9); ruling with truth and justice (verses 7-8). Today, God is still at work, and I too am thankful for the Lord's mercy and provision—for my husband and me personally, for our church community, even in the wider world with all of its trouble, God still reigns.

Be inspired to share your thanks with others.

The psalmist begins with a personal word of thanks—"I thank the Lord with all my heart"—but in the second half of the verse, it immediately becomes a shared experience—"in the company of those who do right, in the congregation" (verse 1b). Giving thanks is meant to be shared with others. What's more, all of God's good gifts are meant to be shared: food, covenant, mercy, compassion, honesty, justice, redemption.

So also today, we give thanks personally and with others, and we are meant to share God's good gifts. That applies to God's provision of material things like food, shelter, clean water, medical care, technology, and to spiritual matters of faith, forgiveness, the new life we can have in Jesus Christ—all these are meant to be shared.

Be inspired to give thanks for everything.

Psalm 111 is an acrostic psalm, where every phrase starts with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet from beginning to end. It was a strict literary form that made the psalm easier to remember, and it was also a way of saying that something was complete. In English we might say something is all there from A to Z, and that's the effect of a Hebrew acrostic. It's as if the psalmist gives thanks for everything, from A to Z, from aleph to taw.

With that, Psalm 111 is complete, for the psalmist begins giving thanks with his whole heart, and ends giving thanks for everything. May we also be inspired to give thanks today!

PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS

Eleanor Galik

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

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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
9:15 am Adult study

This Week at Living Word

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9:15am Adult Bi-ble Study 10:00am Worship Blended Service Potluck Dinner with Pastor Ziemann	29	30 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer Preschool Tour with new family	31 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool Preschool Tour with new family	1 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	2	3

February Celebrations

	
Feb 2	Kyle Motel
Feb 4	David Holloway
Feb 5	Anita Meier
Feb 6	Delores Urbank
Feb 12	Gary Meier
Feb 18	Matt Meier
Feb 23	Russ Tinich
Feb 28	Catie Lyons
Feb 29	Michele Boehm



Feb 1 Beverly Hodo
Feb 28 Petra Wasilkoff

Stewardship Snapshot

January 21st

23 Worshipped, 21 Communed
 5 Watched Live
15 Watched Later
 43 Total

Financial Support
 \$1,155.00 General Fund

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.

PUSH PRAYER will be available on Zoom now for any of our out-of-towners to join us. I will email the link out to before leaving church on Monday afternoon, so it would be easier for you to find the email with the link in your inbox. Just click on the link and it will connect you to the group. **Please see below for the Zoom info for the PUSH PRAYER on January 30th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89226586662?pwd=bk5KT0NKRFZ0dXpicDJhQ1FPd09xZz09>

Meeting ID: 892 2658 6662 Passcode: 274143

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,89226586662#,,,,*274143# US (Chicago)





+13092053325,,89226586662#,,,,*274143# US

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

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

February 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	2	3
4 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship Traditional Communion Hymnal Service	5	6 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	7 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	8 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	9	10
11 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Worship Service Transfiguration Sunday	12	13 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	14  9:00am—12:00pm Preschool Valentine's Day Party 6:00pm Ash Wednesday Service 	15 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 7:00pm Council Meeting	16	17
18 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Communion Worship Service	19 President's Day	20 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	21 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	22 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	23	24
25 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Worship Service	26	27 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	28 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	29 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool Leap Day	Ash Wednesday  <i>February 14, 2024</i> <i>6:00pm</i>	

Mission of the Month

Gideon Bible Translators

January 2024 Mission of the Month



“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations”... Matthew 28:19

The Gideons International provides Bibles and New Testaments to people all over the World. They work with hotels and also distribute Scriptures in strategic locations so they are available to those who want them, as well as to those who may not know they need them. They are a body of believers dedicated to making the Word of God available to everyone and, together with the local church, reaching souls for Christ.

Preschool News



OUR PRESCHOOL IS GETTING BIGGER!!!

It has been a busy month and a very busy week for Mrs. Diana and her class. The 6th student had started this month when they returned from Christmas break, Cooper is fitting in very nicely. Her 7th student will be starting at the beginning of March, right after she turns 3. On Tuesday, Kyle was even here as he had E-Learning that day, so before his class had started online, he was able to play with the kids for a little bit. This week, Lois Stewart from the NID office came to visit the class on Thursday, she watched how the children sang their Letters of the Alphabet song, the Days of the Week song also. Lois was very impressed by how much the children are learning here. She watched and helped with their pattern

train craft and seen how they were all writing their letters in the folders and coloring the items that began with the letter of the week “Z”. That same afternoon, she had a tour scheduled with a new family, and she has 3 more tours scheduled for next week. Plus she already knows that 2 or 3 of her students will be returning for sure next year. This may end up being her biggest class yet. Please keep spreading the word about what a wonderful teacher Mrs. Diana is and what a wonderful program that she has at the preschool. Check out all of the transportation crafts that they have made so far this month.

CHANGE IN SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES are in full swing as we are getting used to the different formats. The first Sunday of every month will be a traditional hymnal worship service and the third Sunday of the month will usually be an informal outreach or praise service and the remaining Sundays will usually be the blended service that we currently have. This was a trial basis for 6 months, which will end this month, at which time you will have a chance to express your favorites, suggest minor changes to either service and choose if we do this going forward or use one or the other or go back to the same service styles each week. If you could give your feedback in the coming weeks on your opinions and likes and dislikes, it would be greatly appreciated. The council will be addressing these surveys in the January council meeting. As always we appreciate your participation and value your input. My apologies for misleading anyone in thinking that we were actually voting on the type of service you prefer.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available and on the desk in the fellowship hall, if they already have been put away, please see me, they are in the office then.

2023 CONTRIBUTION TAX STATEMENTS have been printed out and available on the desk in the fellowship hall. If you find any discrepancies in the statements, please give me a call or see me in the office.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS! We have a request from Dianna Bonfield from Lutheran Church Charities for a driver to help a gentleman that is in Alden Estates Assisted Living located behind the Marcus Theaters in Orland Park to be able to come to worship. He is 40 years old, has suffered a stroke recently. He is in a wheel chair, but is able to get in and out of cars by himself. If you are interested in helping him, please let me know.

CARE MEALS HAVE RETURNED! We have started up our Care Meal Teams again. I am hoping to be able to organize a few teams of volunteers to help or assist with cooking or buying different dishes for meals for our families that are going through medical issues, hospital stays, treatments and those who might have lost loved ones recently. We currently have 5 volunteers, and we will always accept more people to step up to give a helping hand. We don't need you to have to cook anything, one will donate money when need be. If you are interested in volunteering, please let me or Diana know. There is a sign up sheet on the desk in the fellowship hall as well. We have already made a meal for Ken Marks' mom last month, and we have made several meals and bought snacks and frozen meals to John and Jay Gabrielson last month also. Thank you in advance for your service and support towards this ministry.

PRAYER REQUEST OF THANKSGIVING for Pastor John as he was in the long-term care facility of the Victorian Village. He is still weak and a fall risk, but as I let everyone know via email, his daughter Lisa had called me a couple of months ago and said that they had re-evaluated his condition and moved him to the regular assisted living building. He is now able to join in the meals in the dining area and/or any activities that he wants to participate in, just as long as he has someone with him. His new room number is at the bottom of this page. Pastor Lee and Elaine visit him on Sundays from time to time, he still tires easily, and is still weak. He has expressed that he is up to having visitors again. Just plan on short visits with him so he doesn't try to overdo it and won't get too overwhelmed. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as they are very concerned about Pastor John, but are very thankful for his incredibly improved condition. If you would like to send cards and/or well wishes within the next week or to call him, here is the complete address: John Bucka, C/O Victorian Village, **Room #108**, 12600 Renaissance Circle, Homer Glen, IL 60491. Phone number for Victorian Village is 708-578-7091, so just ask for Pastor John Bucka when they answer.

DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK *Peter asked Jesus, "What about him, Lord?" - John 21:21 (NLT)*

We are called to focus our thoughts on God and His mission for us. The temptation is to compare our recognition and honor to the recognition and honor given to others, to compare our sacrifice to the sacrifice of others. This is especially true when recognition and honor do not come to us, or when great sacrifice is required of us. Even the Apostle Peter was not immune to this. So continue to focus on God alone, so as to avoid comparing yourself with other Christians.



“Wisdom”

Psalm 111 says: *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...”*

1) The WORD of God is the source of wisdom.

¹⁵ The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. ¹⁶ For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” ¹⁷ The Lord said to me: “What they say is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. ²⁰ But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death.” Deuteronomy 18:15-20

2) The LOVE of God is the expression of wisdom.

⁸ Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. ² Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. ³ But whoever loves God is known by God. ⁴ So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), ⁶ yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. ⁷ But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. ⁸ But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. ⁹ Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. ¹² When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall. 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

3) The SON of God is the fulfillment of wisdom.

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” ²⁵ “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. ²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee. Mark 1:21-28

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday

*Following the Way of Love
through Lent*

Ash Wednesday Service

February 14, 2024 at 6:00pm

