

THIS DAY IS HOLY TO OUR LORD. DO NOT GRIEVE, FOR THE

the joy of the Lord is your strength.

~ NEHEMIAH 8:10 ~

IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 33, Issue 1

January 7, 2024

"Enjoy Each Day of This New Year"

Each day is a gift from God. Next to your salvation, today is the most valuable gift you will ever receive. When you receive a gift, what do you do? Thank the giver, unwrap it, and enjoy it. Getting the idea?

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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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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
9:15 am Adult study

One Bible teacher writes: 'I make an effort to focus on and enjoy every moment of my life, but doing so has been a long and difficult journey for me...I am a planner, and if I am not careful, I find myself planning the next thing while doing the current thing, which, of course, steals the present moment from me. Although being focused is a good thing, I can also easily get so focused on my work that I fail to enjoy the magic of the moment. For example, I was usually working while my children were little and found it difficult even to take a moment to stop and enjoy the cute things they said or did. I missed many of those moments and will never get them back. We should celebrate life and the people God has placed in our path. Life is to be enjoyed, not dreaded or regretted.'

Solomon wrote: *'There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and make himself enjoy good in his labor. Even this, I have seen, is from the hand of God'* (Ecclesiastes 2:24 AMPC). Note these two phrases: 1) *'From the hand of God.'* That means it's God's will for you to enjoy every day. 2) *'Make himself enjoy good.'* That means you must look for things to celebrate each day. And you can start doing this – today!

You need to enjoy each day of your life for Christ's sake, because He paid a very high price for you to be able to. He said, *'I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)'* (John 10:10). He said: *'I have told you these things, that My joy and delight may be in you, and that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing'* (John 15:11). He said, *'Ask and keep on asking and you will receive, so that your joy (gladness, delight) may be full and complete'* (John 16:24).

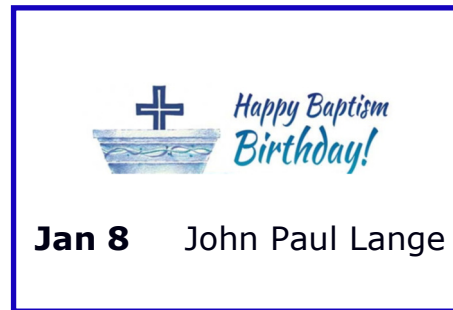
Jesus actually prayed that you would have joy: *'Now I am coming to You; I say these things while I am still in the world, so that My joy may be made full and complete and perfect in them [that they may experience My delight fulfilled in them, that My enjoyment may be perfected in their own souls, that they may have My gladness within them, filling their hearts]'* (John 17:13).

With Jesus Himself praying such powerful words about His desire for you to have joy, how could you ever doubt that God wants you to be happy and enjoy your life? As a redeemed child of God, you're a walking advert for Christianity! Don't go around looking severe, stern, strict, sour, and sensorial, believing that you're coming across as 'spiritual'. No, that's a turnoff to non-Christians! You need a new mindset; a scriptural one that will enable you to enjoy life and make you a more enjoyable person to be around.

This Week at Living Word

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship Traditional Communion Hymnal Service Epiphany Observed	8	9:00am—12:00pm Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	10 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	11 9:00am—12:00pm Preschool	12	13

January Celebrations



Stewardship Snapshot

December 31st

30 Worshipped
 2 Watched Live
6 Watched Later
 38 Total

Financial Support
 \$2,025.00 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 9th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88187997578?pwd=dFFzZUVjTWo1YjNpQnFuNHpnVWdQQT09>

Meeting ID: 881 8799 7578 Passcode: 239139

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,88187997578#,,,,*239139# US (Chicago)

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.

DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK *Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and headed to shore. - John 21:7 (NLT)*

In the midst of your everyday life, God calls to you. Peter wants to be with his Lord; when He shows up, Peter drops everything and goes. How ready are we to immediately respond to God's revelation and direction?

Living Word Endowment Fund

LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 12/31/2023)

The current value of the fund is \$169,212.34 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$30,613.64. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$53,617.97. Of this, \$26,808.99 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	30,613.64
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>53,617.97</u>
	Total market value	\$169,212.34



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

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.

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.

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.

POINSETTIAS CAN BE TAKEN HOME! The owner of Baas Greenhouse had retired, the nursery has been purchased and is now called 88th Ave Nursery. They have worked with us to be able to purchase our poinsettias again, yay! They have graciously reduced the delivery fee and will be delivering the multi-plant 8" poinsettias for the same reduced price of the 6" single plants. Please visit them, they are opened to the public and are located at 20143 So. 88th Avenue, Mokena, IL and their phone number is 815-469-1481. They are a small and new business, and they have been more than helpful and kind to us. Let's try to show that same kindness back to them and help them grow their business. If you would like to take one home with you, please do so.

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 few weeks 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. My apologies if the directives I had been given previously had kept you from visiting him all this while. 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 is 708-578-7091.

BALLOTS have been counted to call Pastor Ziemann. The vote was unanimous. We had 28 total votes. Thank you to everyone who voted. Donna has been working on the call documents and we will be sending them to Pastor Ziemann, his church in Painesville, OH and to the district. Please continue to pray for Pastor Ziemann as he contemplates his decision to accept the call or not. Also, please keep our church in your prayers during this time.

A THANK YOU CARD was received from Lutheran Bible Translators. It reads; *'Your gift to Lutheran Bible Translators supports partnerships with language communities to equip and empower them with the light of Scripture. Thank you!'* It is signed, *"Yours in Christ, Cindy"*. The card can be found on our bulletin board next to the office.

CHURCH COUNCIL will be meeting on January 18th, they will be discussing financials, the worship surveys, so please make sure you fill those survey forms out. I have extra copies in the rack next to the office door if you need one. Diana will update them on the Call process and the preschool as well.

Preschool News

PRESCHOOL will start back from their winter break, this coming Tuesday, January 9th. They will be welcoming a new friend to their class. Cooper will be joining Mrs. Diana's class, he is the younger brother of one of her students from last year. Not only is it a new year and new month, but it's also new theme. Mrs. Diana will be teaching them all about transportation and all of the different types of vehicles. The Dramatic Arts Play Area is all set up with drive-ins and all sorts of cars and trucks. As you can see from the pictures below, they will also be taking off in their very own airplane, lol. I am sure she will be telling them how early they have to leave for the airport in order to check in with TSA and to make sure they have something to eat before getting on the airplane.



1-7-2024 Message Outline

"May All Bow Down To Him"

We pray with Psalm 72: *"May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. May all kings bow down to him, and all nations serve him."*

1) "May God's light make me RADIANT."

60 "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. ² See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. ³ Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴ "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. ⁵ Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. ⁶ Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD. Isaiah 60:1-6

2) "May God's mystery give me WISDOM."

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although 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, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Ephesians 3:1-12

3) "May God's King lead me to WORSHIP."

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and 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." ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When 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.'" ⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He 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." ⁹ After 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. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. Matthew 2:1-12

THESE GIFTS
THAT THE MAGI
BRING THE
BABY JESUS...



THEY ARE HEAVY WITH SYMBOLISM:
GOLD BECAUSE JESUS IS A KING,
FRANKINCENSE BECAUSE HE IS
GOD AND MYRRH, BECAUSE JESUS
IS A MORTAL HUMAN BEING.*



*ORIGEN, CONTRA
CELSUS 1:60

SOME THINK THAT THE
VALUE OF THESE GIFTS
FINANCED THE HOLY
FAMILY'S ESCAPE TO
EGYPT



THUS INTRODUCING
THE SACRED
TRADITION OF THE
GIFT RECEIPT!



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