



# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 33, Issue 24

June 23, 2024

## "Our Help is in the Name of the Lord"

### Overview

Psalm 124 is the fifth psalm in the collection of fifteen psalms known as the "Songs of Ascents" (120–134). Jewish pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem three times each year to celebrate festivals. They sang these psalms on the way to the holy city and at the festal celebrations after their arrival. In Psalm 124 the psalmist leads the pilgrim people of God in giving thanks to the LORD for delivering them from a powerful enemy and in expressing their confident trust in the God who is on their side.

### Recollection of danger

The psalm begins by recollecting the terrible danger from which the LORD delivered the worshipers. The psalmist sings out the opening line: "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side." Before completing his statement, he calls the congregation to join him in repeating the declaration: "let Israel now say—if it had not been the LORD who was on our side...". The intentional delay in finishing the conditional statement creates dramatic tension. The reader wants to know how the pilgrims' circumstances would have turned out differently had not the LORD been on their side. The psalm doesn't provide details about the specific danger faced by the people beyond indicating that hostile enemies had threatened them. Instead vivid images are employed to bring home to us the total disaster that had loomed so near. Israel's enemy, in its fiery anger, was like a hideous monster able to consume its prey in a single gulp. The imagery shifts in verses 4 and 5 to overpowering flood waters threatening to engulf the people. Before such an enemy the pilgrims were helpless.

### Praise for deliverance

After recalling their danger the congregation praises the LORD for rescuing them from the fangs of their enemy. In yet another metaphor, their deliverance is pictured as a bird narrowly escaping the fowler's snare. Their situation had not been one of mere *potential* danger but *actual* danger from which they almost did not escape. The response of praise acknowledges that their deliverance was not due to their own wisdom or strength but rather the LORD exercising his saving power.

### Confession of trust

The final verse is a confession of confident trust in the LORD—the pilgrims' covenant God—who fights as a warrior against their enemies. As the Creator of heaven and earth, his power is infinite. The strength and ferocity of Israel's enemies were no match for the Almighty. He is on the pilgrims' side and has exercised his might on their behalf in the past. Therefore, his pilgrim people declare their continued trust in him: "Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

### Reflection

As God's people under the new covenant, we are no longer obligated to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Yet we, like the faithful, are a pilgrim people. Along with Abraham and his descendants, we are "strangers and exiles on the earth", people "seeking a homeland" and desiring "a better country, that is, a heavenly one". "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come". We are not a settled people; we are people on a journey to the new Jerusalem, our eternal home where we will experience true rest and *shalom*. God doesn't promise us an easy, pain-free pilgrimage. In fact, we should expect opposition as we travel toward the heavenly city. Like the pilgrims' enemies in Psalm 124, our enemies are fierce and seek to destroy us. "Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour". Satan and his evil army of demons wage war against the Church. We journey through a world in rebellion against its Creator. Hostility toward the Creator often is expressed in hostility toward God's people. Jesus reminded his followers, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you". Likewise, Peter told his Christian readers the world would slander them and accuse them of being evildoers for faithfully following Christ. Despite the danger and difficulty of our pilgrimage, we can be confident that our enemies will not ultimately destroy us. Paul alludes to Psalm 124 when he says in, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" Our earthly and spiritual enemies cannot successfully oppose us, at least not ultimately. God has pledged to be our helper and defender.

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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

## This Week at Living Word

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Worship Service	24	25 10:00am Push Prayer	26	27	28 10:00am Preschool Tour	29

### June Celebrations



**June 23** Joe U.  
**June 24** Robert H.



**June 29** George H.



**June 26** Anita & Gary Meier

### Offerings

<b>June 9th</b>
\$770.00 General Fund
\$6,683.00 Law Enforcement Bibles Project
<u>\$30.00</u> VBS Designated Fund
\$7,483.00 Total General Fund Deposit
<b>June 16th</b>
\$2,030.00 Total General Fund Deposit

### Attendance

<b>June 16th</b>
24 Worshipped, 23 Communed
2 Watched Live
<u>10 Watched Later</u>
36 Total

## 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

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** usually meets every Sunday morning in the conference room from 9:30 to 9:55. Please join Pastor Lee and the others every Sunday as they learn about the Word of God.

**VERSE OF THE MONTH** <sup>-9</sup> *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.* Joshua 1:9

**PRAYER REQUEST OF THANKSGIVING** for Pastor John as he is in the regular assisted living building. He is now able to join in the meals in the dining area and/or any activities that he can participate in, just as long as he has someone with him. His new room number is at the bottom of this page. 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 improved condition. If you would like to send cards or well wishes or to call him, here is the complete address: John Bucka, C/O Victorian Village, **Rm #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.

**PRESCHOOL** is now closed for the summer months. She has 4 students enrolled for next fall already, plus she has a tour scheduled for next Friday morning with a new family. Please keep Mrs. Diana and our preschool in your prayers for additional growth and opportunity.

**MOWING OPPORTUNITIES** are still available if you are interested and able to help our mow crew. We currently have about 3 or 4 people who have volunteered to help us out each week. This is a huge help for us to save money.

**CONGREGATION VOTERS' MEETING** was on June 9th. The transition team presented the three pastors whom we have been talking with. We recommended Pastor Massey from Florida. After voting closed on Tuesday, June 11th, the count was 25-2 in favor of Pastor Massey. Pastor Schauer called him that evening to make sure he would still be available and interested in receiving the call papers which he was on both questions. Diana mailed the documents on Monday. Please join me in keeping Pastor Massey and his son in your prayers as they pray about this Call.

**CHURCH SURVEYS** need to be completed online by mid to late June. These surveys are completely anonymous. This survey comes from the Synod and is used for helping the churches grow in different directions and help your voice being heard how you would like to see our church grow. Other churches in our area have already taken this survey. We have a total of 4 computers and/or laptops available if you would prefer to do the survey here at church on Sunday after worship. I did my survey, and it roughly took about 20 minutes or so. I will also have hard copies of the survey available on Sunday, if you prefer you can take one, fill it out and drop it in the basket that is on the desk in the fellowship hall. I will enter the information in on the survey during the course of the week. Thank you in advance for helping us try to improve and grow in the correct direction.



## CHURCH SURVEY

Watch your email! If you prefer  
a hard copy please see Bev.



**THANK YOU BILL!** Last Saturday Bill Merchantz and family came here in this heat and planted our vegetable garden for us. He planted cucumbers, onions and tomatoes in the little garden are by the preschool play ground. I would very much appreciate it if you are here during the week or even on Sundays when Bill isn't here to help me water the garden, with this heat, the plants can use all the water they can get. Or if it would be easier, if someone could help connect the sprinkler to the hose and snake it around so it can stay in the garden but not be in the way of the mowers. And of course Bill had his two supervisors to watch over the planting, thank you to Abby and Freddy for their help too.

**CARE MEALS HAVE RETURNED!** We have started up our Care Meal Teams again. We have one team 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.

**COUNCIL MEETING** was Wednesday night. Among the topics that was discussed are the financials as always, the Call process, and items that are needed for the church. The meeting notes are on page 6 of this newsletter and will also be shared during the announcements after the worship service Sunday.



## Lutheran Church Charities June 2024 Mission of the Month

Lutheran Church Charities works throughout the United States and Internationally in bringing the Mercy, Compassion, Presence, and Proclamation of Jesus Christ to those suffering and in need.

They offer different ministrys including K-9 Comfort Dogs, Kare 9 Military Ministry, K- 9 Police Ministry, Disaster Response, Human Care Ministry, and Hearts of Mercy & Compassion

**LCC K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry** was launched in August of 2008, and it is a national human-care ministry embracing the unique, calming nature and skills of purebred Golden Retrievers. The LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs are a bridge for compassionate ministry, opening doors for conversation about faith and creating opportunities to share the mercy, compassion, presence and proclamation of Jesus Christ. They serve everyday in the community in which they are places in times of disaster and crisis to bring comfort to all those affected, including first responders and the volunteers who serve them.

**LCC Kare 9 Military Ministry** is a ministry by veterans for veterans. They strive to serve our military veterans and their families. The Kare-9 Military Ministry dogs and their trained veteran handlers visit many places including VFWs, VA hospitals, Traumatic Brain Injury Care Centers, homes of veterans that are home bound, Expos, Vet Clinics and various other activities to help spread the mercy and compassion.

**LCC K-9 Police Ministry** handlers are law enforcement officers (current and former) who understand the unique challenges facing the law enforcement community. They bring the mercy, compassion, presence and proclamation of Jesus Christ to those who protect and serve, as well as their families. Crisis Response serves the law enforcement and family members in their time of need, by providing comfort following injuries, deaths or major incidents. Ongoing Support is the K-9 visits (headquarters, substations and dispatch centers), provides assistance with department missions such as Christmas shopping with children, summer camps and public events, comforting crime victims prior to interviews, counseling or courtroom testimonies, and general support for department members and their families.

**LCC Disaster Response Ministries** coordinates deployment of trained volunteers for Disaster Response. When disasters strike; lives, homes, businesses, churches and more are affected. LCC L.E.R.T. volunteers respond quickly to serve people affected by a disaster. LCC teams are trained to work through local churches to serve their communities. LCC Disaster Response provides on-site and online (L.E.R.T.) basic training. Additional training includes expertise in the area of chainsaw, heavy equipment, debris removal, flood recovery, and emotional and spiritual care.

**Hearts of Mercy and Compassion (HMC), Crosses for Losses** provides a physical and spiritual symbol through the giving of hearts and crosses to families and friends who have suffered a loss or are experiencing the illness of a loved one. An HMC can also be given to celebrate a victory, honor service, as an expression of love, or to be an encouragement in the face of adversity. Given as a gift, each HMC provides the love and hope of Jesus through presence and prayer. Upon request, LCC, working though churches, can provide an HMC at no charge.

## “Our Help”

Psalm 124 says: “Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth...”

### 1) My help comes from the MAKER of heaven & earth.

Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: <sup>2</sup>“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? <sup>3</sup>Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. <sup>4</sup>“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. <sup>5</sup>Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? <sup>6</sup>On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—<sup>7</sup>while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? <sup>8</sup>“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, <sup>9</sup>when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, <sup>10</sup>when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, <sup>11</sup>when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt’?”

Job 38:1-11

### 2) My help comes from the MINISTRY of grace & power.

As God’s co-workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation. <sup>3</sup>We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. <sup>4</sup>Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; <sup>5</sup>in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; <sup>6</sup>in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; <sup>7</sup>in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; <sup>8</sup>through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; <sup>9</sup>known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything. <sup>11</sup>We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. <sup>12</sup>We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. <sup>13</sup>As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

2 Corinthians 6:1-13

### 3) My help comes from the MASTER of wind & waves.

<sup>35</sup>That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup>Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup>A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup>Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” <sup>39</sup>He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. <sup>40</sup>He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” <sup>41</sup>They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Mark 4:35-41



## VBS SUPPLIES

- 10 Plastic Tablecloths
- 300 Napkins
- 5 Rolls of Paper Towels
- 350 Paper Plates
- 350 small/med. Paper Cups
- 2 Boxes of Ziplock Baggies
- 70 Plastic Knives
- 6 Large Containers Drink Mix (Not Red)
- 5 Boxes of Vanilla Wafers
- 4 Bags of Baby Carrots
- 5 Boxes of Graham Crackers
- 5 Bags of Thin Pretzel Sticks & Rods
- 4 Bags of Veggie Straws
- 2 Large Boxes of Gold Fish
- 4 Bags of Mini Marshmallows
- 9 Containers of Vanilla Frosting
- 2 Bags of White Chocolate Chips
- 2 Bottles of Ranch Dressing
- 6 Large Bags of Skinny Pop Popcorn
- 2 Large Bags of Swedish Fish

Living Word Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Notes  
Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at 7 pm.

Attendees: Neal H, Diana M, Ken M, Bill M, and Paul H

The meeting was opened with prayer by Neal at 7:15.

As we waited for Bill to get there, we talked about the church survey. As of Wednesday morning, we had 10 people fill it out. Diana pulled up the Constant Contact information and showed the council who had opened the email and who still had not. It was then found out that some people may have not gotten the email as it went to their junk folder. Diana said she would send an email from our regular email account asking people to fill out the survey. We can extend the date but would be appreciated if people could fill it out by the 20<sup>th</sup>. The district would like at least 30 to submit it. Diana did send out that email.

We then discussed finances and felt that everything looked good. Bill did let the council know that Church Mutual's cost was increasing by about \$23. The council was ok with this increase. Bill did have to pay for some VBS supplies out of the general fund right now but once we have VBS we will be able to repay the general fund. Diana did let the council know she still needs to order shirts for VBS and will order a few extra to ensure anyone who registers next month can still get a shirt. It takes about 2 to 3 weeks to get the shirts, so Diana wants to make sure she has them in time. The best price she can find is \$8.89 as of right now for the shirts. We are charging \$15 this year for VBS. Our new security cameras and system is now fully paid for as well.

Diana did let everyone know as of right now we have 57 kids registered and about 10 volunteers. We still only have 4 registered for preschool this coming school year. We do have a preschool tour next Friday the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Paul has been looking into new bulbs for our projector in the sanctuary. Diana mentioned when she changed the bulb in the classroom it was such a clearer picture and maybe that can help with the projection during worship. Paul was able to find them and will be getting them soon.

We had the survey of the lot done and found out that the one house that had a trampoline in their backyard part of it was on our property. Bill was able to get in touch with the owner and the items have since been moved. On the other side, we have found out that some of the townhomes landscaping is on our property. Bill is going to reach out to someone to have a letter written up to those homeowners making it known that if they were to sell or we were to sell that some of their landscaping is on our property.

Diana did let everyone know that call papers have been mailed to the district and Pastor Massey. She will reach out to Pastor Massey to make sure he got them and also let him know if he would like to come for a visit before deciding, he was more than welcome to.

Lastly, Neal is going to reach out to Proven It about the copier to ask about a few more questions we have especially if we were to lease the copy machine with the opportunity to buy it out after what the interest rates would be and what is the benefit to do so. We could save about \$30 by going with a different copier but want to make sure it is in the best interest of the church.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm with a prayer from Neal

## CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

**CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE!!!** Pastor Massey has reached out to Diana to let her know that he has received the Call documents and stated that he is very humble by our decision to Call him. He also expressed interest in the fact that he would like to come visit our church with his son, Marco. He will work it out with the church that he is helping out at to see when would be the best time. We, of course will have our usual Meet and Greet for him and his son, and as Diana stated with a small potluck, and as he stated "Is there such a thing as small potluck in a Lutheran Church?" I wonder if he has been here before, lol.

**REQUEST FOR HELP:** Pastor Massey is also asking if someone can help him look at houses for sale while he is here. I am willing to help them out if needed, but I also feel that more than just one person's opinion should be considered.