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# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 33, Issue 26

July 7, 2024

## "Are You Flourishing?"

**Do you need motivation today?** Take a look at the palm tree.

**1) You can cut it, but you can't kill it!** The minerals and nutrients most trees need to survive are found on the surface, just below the bark, so, when you cut them, they die. But not the palm tree. Its life comes from within, so it flourishes, even under attack. Listen: *'We have this treasure in earthen vessels'*. How wonderful; even though the earthen vessel without may be cut and wounded, the treasure within is secure, beyond the enemy's reach!

**2) It will bend, but it won't break.** Tropical winds can blow most trees away, but not the palm tree. The stronger the wind, the further it bends - sometimes all the way to the ground. Yet when the storm ceases, it straightens up again and is actually stronger in the place where it bent. What a picture! We were made to bend, but not break, because God gives us *'strength that endures the unendurable and spills over into joy'* (Colossians 1:11).

**3) Its depth always exceeds its height!** While the roots of the average plant go only a few feet under the ground, the palm tree's roots can go down hundreds of yards in search of water. David said, *'As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you'* Go deep, work on your own connection to God and you'll never be uprooted, or barren, or blown away! Inside you there's a battle between your flourishing self – the person you were created to be – and your suffering self. 'What's that?' you ask. Your suffering self feels uneasy and discontent. You're drawn to bad habits like mindlessly watching TV, drinking too much, misusing sex, excessive spending – things designed to temporarily anesthetize pain. Your thoughts automatically drift in the direction of fear and anger. Learning doesn't feel worthwhile. You think about yourself most of the time. Whereas flourishing, thriving, blossoming, and prospering takes place:

**1) In your spirit.** You sense you're beginning to receive ideas and energy from an outside source. And you are. You're being empowered by God's Spirit. We talk about being inspired, which literally means *'God breathed'*. God breathes into you; you come alive and feel like you have a purpose for living.

**2) In your mind.** Your thoughts are marked by joy and peace. You have a desire to love and to learn. You're literally being transformed by *'the renewing of your mind'* (Romans 12:2).

**3) In your time.** You wake each day with a sense of excitement, and you realize you're never too young to flourish. Mozart was composing brilliant music when he was five. Paul told Timothy, *'Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young'* (1 Timothy 4:12). You also realize you're never too old to flourish. Grandma Moses was sixty-nine when she took up painting, and artist Marc Chagall did some of his best work in his nineties. It's humbling to acknowledge you can't be anything you want. But once you accept that and seek to maximize what God created you to be, you start flourishing.

**Here are two more areas in which God created you to flourish:**

**1) Your relationships.** Relationally, your languishing self is often troubled. You're undisciplined in what you say, sometimes reverting to sarcasm, gossip, and flattery. You isolate. You dominate. You attack. You withdraw. Whereas your flourishing self seeks to bless others. They energize you. You're able to disclose your thoughts and feelings in a way that invites openness in them. You're quick to admit your own mistakes and to freely forgive others.

**2) Your experiences.** God grows you because He wants to use you in His plans to redeem His world: that's why you find Him changing your experiences. Your flourishing self has a desire to contribute. You live with a sense of calling. Indeed, your inner longing to become all you were meant to be is a tiny echo of God's longing to begin the new creation. The rabbis spoke of this as *tikkun olam* – to repair the world. Focused on yourself, your life is as small as a grain of wheat. Given to God, however, it's as if that grain is planted in rich soil, growing into part of a much bigger project.

**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
<b>7</b> 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Worship Traditional Communion Hymnal Service Pastor Schauer	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10:00am Push Prayer	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>

### July Celebrations



### Stewardship Snapshot

<b>June 30th</b>
21 Worshipped
2 Watched Live
<u>9 Watched Later</u>
32 Total
<u>Financial Support</u>
\$1,750.00 Total General Offering
\$143.00 Lutheran Church Charities
<u>\$3,230.00</u> Police Officers' Bibles
\$5,123.00 Total General Fund Deposit

### 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.

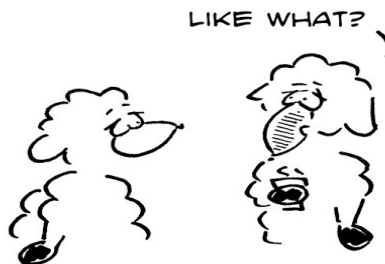
#### RADIO & TV OPPORTUNITIES

- **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 was reevaluated this week. He has expressed that he is up to having visitors and phone calls again. He is walking around more, he is still very leery to want to go out as he doesn't want to take the risk of falling again. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as they are very concerned about Pastor John, as we all are, and 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.



# Living Word Endowment Fund

## LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 6/30/2024)

The current value of the fund is \$178,026.47 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$37,421.57. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$55,624.17. Of this, \$27,812.09 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	37,421.57
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>55,624.17</u>
	<b>Total market value</b>	<b>\$178,026.47</b>



### 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 INTERNATIONAL** will be our Mission of the Month for July. Our elder Phil will be giving a presentation for Gideon's Bibles on Sunday, July 7th. As always this will be our mission for the entire month.

**ANOTHER DONATION** came in for the Police Officers' Bible Project. Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church from Bismarck, ND sent in another check for \$3,230.00. This brings the total that Pastor Lee collected for his Bibles to \$18,425.00. We would like to thank not only our members but to all of the churches that have been helping Pastor Lee with this endeavor. It is truly a worthwhile and much needed tool for all of our law enforcement officers.

**JUNE'S MISSION OF THE MONTH** was Lutheran Church Charities. We had collected \$143.00 which was just deposited into the General Fund Account on Monday, plus we received another donation for them this week, and that will be deposited into that same account at the beginning of next week. As always thank you so much for your overwhelming generosity.

## Gideon Bible International July 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** is now closed for the summer months. She has 4 students enrolled for next fall already, she had a tour last Friday morning with a new family that has registered their daughter for the fall semester of 2025/2026 school year. Please keep Mrs. Diana and our preschool in your prayers for additional growth and opportunity. Also please let everyone you know what a wonderful program she has, and how their children will flourish in our preschool.

**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.

**WINDY CITY THUNDERBOLTS** Church Night will be Saturday, August 17th. It will be "Elvis Night" also. Tickets are \$7.00. Seats were in a great location last year. The game will start at 6:00pm. There is a sign up sheet on the desk in the fellowship hall. Ticket orders will need to be placed by Sunday, August 4th. We had 7 people attend the game last year, and we all had a great time. There will be a post game fireworks show as well.



## Thank You

**THANK YOU** to Pastor Rick Schauer for filling in for Pastor Lee this Sunday. We look forward to worshipping with you Pastor Rick. We know that you are very busy and we appreciate you taking the time to lead us in worship and to serve us communion this Sunday morning.

**THANK YOU** also to all that had filled out the survey that we participated in for the Synod. All of your feedback is very important to our church and how we can grow together. I know that we had at least 28 who took the surveys, hopefully there were more than that. The Synod usually needs to have 30 for optimal results, but given the size of our church and congregation, we came very close at least. I have been in contact with the lady who runs the reports, she will be running ours on Monday, and they will be able to give us a quick turn around with the results. If at all possible I will be able to put the results into my newsletter by the end of the month, they will also be posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

**AND THANK YOU** to all that have signed up to buy supplies for VBS. The list is getting shorter and shorter. VBS is only a little over two weeks away and Diana has already started working on the yellow submarine and some other decorations to transform our church into an Underwater Scuba Adventure. We are already up to 70 kids that have signed up this year. If you can help out for about an hour in the mornings, it would be greatly appreciated, Monday of course is the busiest day. Everyone is trying to sign in, pay the \$15 registration fee, plus this year we will be handing out shirts to each child.

## VBS 2024



- 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 \_\_\_\_\_