



# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 33, Issue 35

September 8, 2024

## "Is the Anger of God Good News?"

### Inside this issue:

"Is the Anger of God Good News?"	1
This Week at Living Word	2
September Celebrations	2
Stewardship Snapshot/Devotional Time	2
Living Word Endowment Fund	3
Special Celebrations	3
Preschool News	4
Mission of the Month	5
Living Word News	5
9-8-2024 Message Outline	6

All the way back in Isaiah 27, the sword of the Lord's wrath is brought out. We are told in verse 4 that thorns and briars will war against Israel's enemies, that unless there is peace, God will bring judgment. All of these images are picked back up again in chapter 34. Commentators aren't sure why Edom is the chosen recipient of wrath in this text though perhaps, "This warning was directed to the nations at large in chapter 27, and Edom's fate is given as an example of what happens when the restored vineyard is violated."

But even Isaiah 27's dire warning of God's judgment ends with a word of hope: "In the days to come Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots, and fill the whole world with fruit." Isaiah 35 more thoroughly fleshes out this blessed reversal.

The fact that the Lectionary centers Isaiah 35 multiple times and Isaiah 34 not at all, it's fair to conclude we're not always sure what to do with the judgment of God. Despite our uncertainty, the prophets certainly seem to share it as good news. How is the anger of God good news? Because we don't have much context and even scholars have to guess as to the historical realities behind these stories of judgment, they can seem arbitrary to readers and to listeners of sermons. In this case, we turn to what we can know, what is revealed to us in Scripture and that is the character of God. God is covenant-maker and keeper. God is protector and defender. God will watch over God's people. God is just and, therefore, weeps over injustice. But God is also powerful and can do something about injustice too. Setting aside our comfortable Western sensibilities and reading the text outside of a comfortable Western setting, isn't it the case that we want God to protect persecuted Christians? To release pastors of house churches from jail? To stand up for Christians whose houses of worship have been burned? To avenge the violence the death of innocent Christians in war or as victims of violence? And isn't the belief that just vengeance can only be mediated through Christ, himself a victim of unjust suffering and death, a safeguard against our own efforts to "even the score"? In this framing, then, the anger of God at the injustice that makes us angry is good news, especially because it leads to redemption's great reversal, which we celebrate in Isaiah 35.

### Great Reversals

Although Isaiah 35:1 isn't reflected in the lectionary reading, it is a great resource to reference. It serves as a kind of thesis statement for what follows and links it back to the hope at the end of Isaiah 27. There are three central images in Isaiah 35, each somewhat captured in this pericope: a blossoming wilderness, healing and wholeness for those diminished by physical suffering and the restoration of exiled people.

In each image, the use of two Hebrew verbs: the first, which we translate "redeemer" is a similar notion to what we see in the book of Ruth, where Boaz "redeems" Ruth and, perhaps more to the point, his relative Naomi from grief and poverty. The work of redemption, which we see in Boaz as a personification of what God does for us, "designates Israel as a member of Yahwe's family to whom Yahweh accepts this family obligation... One common way in which a restorer would need to act would be rescue someone from servitude that had come about through debate, or was threatened by debt." The second Hebrew verb also emerges out of family obligation or covenant loyalty. This has a more explicitly financial meaning that translates as "redress" or, if it is not too loaded a word, "reparation," a repair of what has been ruptured. This word is most often translated for our English Bibles as "vengeance" or "revenge." These words have an unfortunate connotation of going over the top, of further ruining instead of restoring. "It's surely necessary to restore Israel, and it's surely also necessary to require the nations to pay their penalty." This is the work that justice requires, a work accomplished through Christ in his death and resurrection but finally completed in his coming again.

**PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS**

Eleanor Galik  
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

livingwordorland.org  
intouchlwlc@yahoo.com

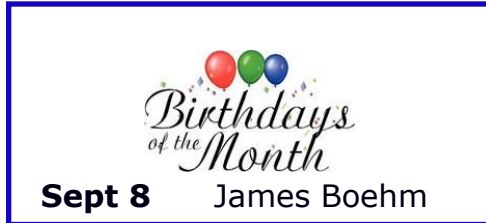
**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**  
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**  
9:15 am Adult study

## September 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>8</b> 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Worship Service Grandparents' Day	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9am–Noon Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	<b>11</b> 9am–Noon Preschool	<b>12</b> 9am–Noon Preschool	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>

## September Celebrations



## Stewardship Snapshot

<b>September 1st</b> 22 Worshipped, 20 Communed 2 Watched Live <u>12 Watched Later</u> 36 Total
---

<b>Financial Support for August 25th</b> 240.00 Phil's Friends (Mission of the Month) <u>1,020.00</u> General Fund Donation <b>\$1,260.00 Total General Fund Deposit</b>  <b>Financial Support for September 1st</b> 1,500.00 Designated Funds Account <u>925.00</u> General Fund Donation <b>\$2,425.00 Total Deposit</b>
--

## 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

**VERSE OF THE MONTH** <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. <sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! <sup>25</sup> Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? <sup>26</sup> Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

<sup>27</sup> "Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. <sup>30</sup> For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. <sup>32</sup> "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. - Luke 12:23-34

**DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK** Through [Jesus Christ our Lord] and for His Name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. - Romans 1:5-6 (NIV)

We have all been called to obedience to God. Where are you in your walk with God today? How faithfully are you following Him in your day-to-day life? Ask God today for the strength to continue to obey His Will.

## LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 8/31/2024)

The current value of the fund is \$184,318.48 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$42,900.34. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$56,437.41. Of this, \$28,218.34 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	42,900.34
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>56,437.41</u>
	<b>Total market value</b>	<b>\$184,318.48</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

## Special Celebrations



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Joe and Delores Urbank on their 70th wedding anniversary this past Wednesday, Sept. 4th. It is such a joy to see how happy you two always are. You're such an inspiration to us newlyweds of only 30-some and 40-some years of marriage under our belts, lol. God bless the both of you on such an accomplishment in your life's journey together. We of course made sure we celebrated with cake and goodies and balloons too. A very blessed and happy anniversary Joe and Delores, with love from your Living Word Lutheran Church family.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to Lucy, our first preschooler that is celebrating a birthday this weekend. She turns 4 on Sunday. Thanks to her mom who made these beautiful butterfly chocolate chip cookies decorated with all her favorite colors too. She made enough for all of Lucy's friends and for Mrs. Diana and Mrs. Bev. They were very delicious.



## Preschool News

**PRESCHOOL** is opened now that summer is over, well at least for school that is. She has 4 students enrolled for this fall, she had a tour earlier this summer 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. Diana is hoping to have our preschool grow into a larger class again this year. In order to help our preschool out, she will be having a very yummy fundraiser. Nothing Bundt Cakes is partnering with us in an effort to help raise money for our preschool. Please see the flyer below for the promotion. All orders will be due by 11/6 and they be ready for pickup on November 18th. Remember you can always freeze them for an extra week to have them for dessert for your Thanksgiving dinner. It's very easy and yummy all at the same time, and there are many delicious varieties and flavors to choose from. It will only be their bundtlets that will be for the fundraiser, each bundtlet is \$6 and comes in their traditional flavors.



## The Sweetest Way to Support Living World Lutheran Church and Preschool

Fundraiser Cake Flavors Available:

Chocolate Chocolate Chip | Red Velvet | White Chocolate Raspberry

Lemon | Confetti | Classic Vanilla | Carrot

Snickerdoodle | Strawberries & Cream | Gluten-Free Chocolate Chip Cookie

**Individual Bundtlet Cost: \$6**

## Mission of the Month



# Howey

Sunday,  
September 29th

**Suggested Donation**  
**\$10 per bottle**

Thank you for your support of  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.



**MOWING OPPORTUNITIES** are still available if you are interested and able to help our mow crew. We currently have about 5 guys who have volunteered to help us out each week. Neal was able to sell our standup mower and bought a new sit down riding mower with a steering wheel, so it is much easier to use, so hopefully we will be able to get a few more volunteers to make it easier for everybody. There is still about another month of mowing for the year, depending on the weather. This is a huge help for us to save money.

**TRANSITION TEAM** has the Call documents for Pastor Koschmann all signed, copied, sealed and mailed. He has now received them and is reviewing the documents, he has reached out to Diana to email him a copy of our constitution and bylaws. Diana will also send a letter notifying his church as to us extending a call to him. Please join me in keeping Pastor Koschmann and his family along with his church, Holy Cross in Los Gatos, CA in your prayers as he hopefully and prayerfully considers accepting our Call.

**A HUGE THANK YOU** to Neal Hartz, Bill and David Merchantz, Ken Marks, Dave Holloway and Ed Baidis for all of their hard work shoveling, moving and spreading the mulch for the Preschool playground on Saturday and then since that pile of mulch wasn't quite enough, Neal ordered some more and him, Ken Marks and Bill Merchantz came back on Friday to finish the job. It looks so good out there. The kids were also very happy to be able to play on the playground equipment each day of school this week.

**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. Pastor Lee and Elaine had visited with him last Sunday and gave him communion and prayed with him. They said that he is in good spirits and alert throughout the day, he is still struggling with having dizziness and falling, but other than that he is doing well.

**VISIT BEING PLANNED** to see Pastor John for his birthday. His birthday is October 3rd, so we will either go to Victorian Village either the Sunday before or the Sunday after. Please see Diana and/or Beverly if you would like to go. We would like to give Victorian Village a heads up prior to bring a caravan of people there. Pastor John will be 88 this year.

**“Who Do You Trust?”**

Psalm 146 says: “Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save ... Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.” Who do you trust...?

**1) Do you trust your SALVATION or God’s SALVATION?**

<sup>4</sup>Say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.” <sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. <sup>6</sup> Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. <sup>7</sup> The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. Isaiah 35:4-7a

**2) Do you trust your RICHES or God’s RICHES?**

<sup>2</sup> My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. <sup>2</sup> Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. <sup>3</sup> If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” <sup>4</sup> have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? <sup>7</sup> Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong? <sup>8</sup> If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. <sup>9</sup> But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ... <sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? <sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. James 2:1-10, 14-18

**3) Do you trust your HEALING or God’s HEALING?**

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. <sup>34</sup> He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “Ephphatha!” (which means “Be opened!”). <sup>35</sup> At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. <sup>36</sup> Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. <sup>37</sup> People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” Mark 7:31-37

It looks like Jesus needs to help our friend with his hearing also, lol.

