

IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 34, Issue 36

September 7, 2025

"The Cost of Discipleship"

What is the Cost of Discipleship?

The cost of discipleship, as described in Luke 14:25–35, is a call to total commitment to Jesus. It requires prioritizing him above family, personal desires, and even one's own life. Jesus uses strong language to emphasize that following him is not a casual decision but one that demands full devotion and perseverance.

A large crowd is following Jesus, and he turns to address them directly. Instead of welcoming them with an easy message, he lays out the radical demands of discipleship: "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple." The word "hate" here is not meant in the emotional sense but as a hyperbolic way of expressing total allegiance. Jesus is making it clear that loyalty to him must surpass all other relationships and self-interests.

"What does Jesus mean by hate."

This teaching is consistent with Luke's broader theme of commitment. Jesus similarly emphasizes the cost of following him, telling potential disciples that even burying one's father or saying farewell to family should not take precedence over his call. In both cases, the challenge is stark—discipleship is not a secondary priority but the defining commitment of one's life.

Jesus continues: "Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

The imagery of the cross would have been shocking to his audience. Crucifixion was a Roman execution method reserved for criminals and rebels, and carrying one's cross meant embracing suffering and humiliation. Jesus is not calling for literal martyrdom in every case, but he is making it clear that true discipleship involves self-denial and willingness to endure hardship for his sake.

This theme of self-denial appears elsewhere in Luke. Jesus tells his followers, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." The addition of "daily" in that passage highlights that discipleship is an ongoing act of surrender, not just a one-time decision. Jesus knows what's coming. In as little as 18 months, he will carry his own cross.

Jesus then gives an example of a man building a tower. He warns that anyone undertaking such a project must first sit down and count the cost to ensure he has enough resources to complete it. If he begins but cannot finish, he will be mocked. The point is clear: following Jesus is not something to enter into lightly. One must consider the sacrifices and be prepared for the long haul.

In context, some of the folks may be hearing Jesus for the first or second time. They may be intrigued by his authority, knowledge, and new approach on teaching the way of God in this world. He's warning them - there's more to this than just me talking and you listening. Times are going to get dangerous and tense. They need a deeper faith that will not wither in the harsh elements of life's challenges. Starting strong or with enthusiasm is one thing. Being resilient through tough times is another.

Next, Jesus presents another analogy, this time of a king considering war. If he realizes he is outmatched, he will send a delegation to negotiate peace. The lesson? Those who follow Jesus must be willing to give up everything, recognizing that discipleship is an all-in commitment. Jesus tells the rich ruler, "Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." While not everyone is called to literal poverty, the principle remains: nothing should be held back from Christ. Jesus concludes with a metaphor about salt. If salt loses its flavor, it is worthless and must be discarded. In the same way, a disciple who does not remain fully committed is ineffective in the kingdom of God.

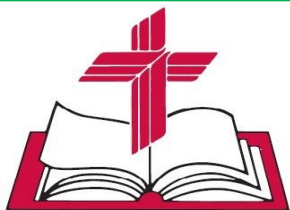
Inside this issue:

"The Cost of Discipleship"	1
This Week at Living Word	2
Celebrations/Church Contacts	2
Stewardship Snapshot/Devotional Time	2
Mission of the Month	3
Grandparents' Day	3
Preschool Pics	4
Living Word News	5
9-7-2025 Message Outline	6

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

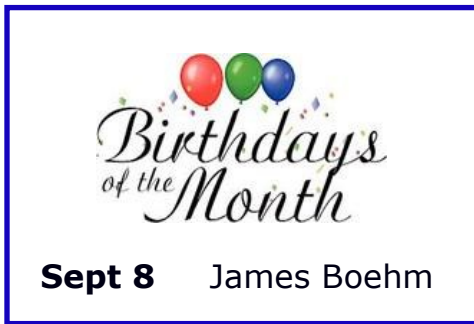
SUNDAY SCHEDULE
9:15 am Adult study

This Week at Living Word

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 10:00am Wor- ship Tradition- al Communion Hymnal Ser- vice 11:00am Fel- lowship Grandparents' Day	8 9am-Noon Preschool	9 9am-Noon Preschool 10:00am Push Prayer	10 9am-Noon Preschool	11 9am-Noon Preschool 7:00pm Council Meeting	12 9am-Noon Preschool	13

September Celebrations

Stewardship Snapshot



August 31st 18 Worshipped 6 Watched Online 23 Total Worshipped
Financial Support \$2,610.00 Total General Fund Offering 230.00 Mission of the Month (Phil's Friends) \$2,840.00 Total 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

DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK ¹¹ Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. ¹² But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring! ¹³ I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry ¹⁴ in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? *Romans 11:11-15*

VERSE OF THE MONTH ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. *Ephesians 4:29*

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY returns at 9:15am Sunday mornings starting next Sunday, September 14th. Please see page 4 for the theme of the first Bible study. Please let Neal know if you are interested in joining the class so he knows how many more books to order.



Mission of the Month

Page 3

PHIL'S FRIENDS was our Mission of the Month for August. We have collected \$230.00 for the cancer patients. The money collected will help them purchase blankets, puzzles, slippers and socks and cards. As always, thank you so much for your generosity. It is so rewarding when we can help these people at their greatest time of need.

SEPTEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH is The Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. We will be having our Honey Sunday on September 28th. I will have the honey order forms in the bulletins every Sunday, so you can fill it out and turn it into the office whenever you want to. That way you will have your honey in time for the baking and hot tea season.



Honey
Sunday,
September 28th
Suggested Donation
\$10 per bottle

The graphic features the word "Honey" in a large, yellow, cursive font. Above the "y" is the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch logo, which includes a silhouette of a head with a cross and the text "DAKOTA BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH". Two cartoon bees are flying around the word "Honey". Below the word, the text "Sunday, September 28th" is written in a simple font, followed by "Suggested Donation" and "\$10 per bottle" in a bold font.

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



Grandparents' Day



Preschool Pics



PRESCHOOL has started this week. Mrs. Diana has 3 girls on 3 days a week and then 1 girl for 5 days. In November, she will have two more students starting. 1 boy and another girl. Another boy will be joining the class in January when he turns 3. They're learning the Pledge of Allegiance, and how to write their names. All four of them went camping on Thursday, and with the beautiful weather that we had this week, they were able to go outside and play. And from what I can tell so far, they will be nice and loud for us in singing their songs during their Christmas Program and their Moving Up/Graduation Program, lol.



PLEASE KEEP THE GALBERT FAMILY in your prayers. Last Friday their house caught on fire and basically lost everything. In a matter of minutes everything they had went up in flames. Clothes, furniture, electronics, photos and other vital necessities were all lost, and sadly one of the family's dogs had not survived the fire either. Fortunately they are all safe no one was home, but the loss of everything was devastating. There is a Go Fund Me page for the family if you would like to help them out. Braden will need to replace everything that he was going to take with him to college and Paige was getting ready to go on a Clean Water Mission in Malawi. Last known, they were trying to seek temporary housing during the time it will take for them to collect on the insurance and relocate. I have some phone numbers for the Shelli and Tom Galbert, I'm not sure how current they are.

LOST RING was found in the church parking lot last week. If you had lost a ring, please come see me in the office.

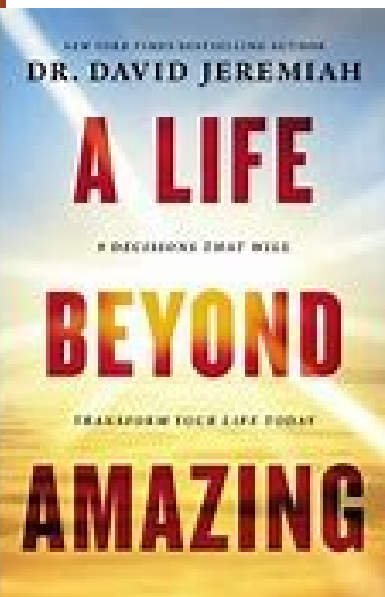
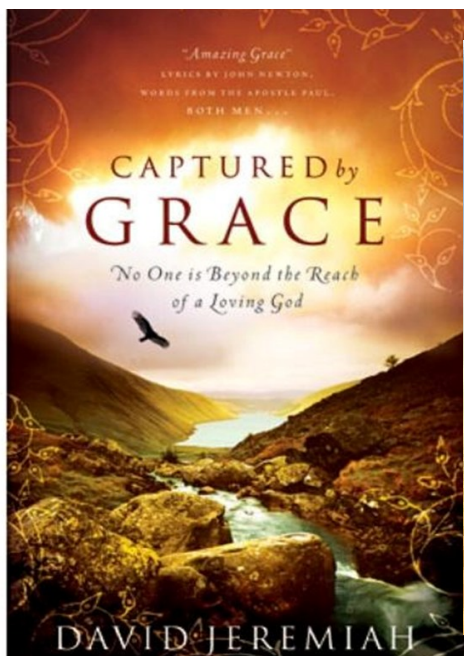
CALL COMMITTEE has received another list from the district. They gave us another two names, we have reviewed the information and planning on calling the pastors to see if they are interested in talking with us.

THE CHICAGO WOLVES is hosting a Lutheran Schools Night. Either Saturday, November 15th at 7:00pm or Sunday, November 16th at 3:00pm. The games are at the Allstate Arena in Rosemont, IL. The Wolves are an AHL (American Hockey League) team. They will be playing the Cleveland Monsters that weekend. As I can gather more information, I will include it in future newsletters. The poster is on the welcome desk in the fellowship hall.



BROOKFIELD ZOO CHRISTMAS TREE has been purchased and we will be planning on decorating the tree on Saturday, November 8th. Most all of the pre-school families have already shown interest and are very excited for the chance to be able to go to the zoo. The zoo will be giving us 20 free passes to hand out to the families, and we can purchase additional ones for \$10.00 each, which is a huge discount on the admission price. If you would like to go, please let us know by Sunday, October 12th, so we can purchase the additional passes.

CAPTURED BY GRACE will be the first book that the Bible study classes will begin with. The group will be doing one chapter a week, each chapter is basically a different topic, so if you can't make it for the entire book, you won't be behind. They will do one chapter a week and they should finish up by the start of Advent or shortly there after. The following study will be based on the book, A Life Beyond Amazing.



DAVID JEREMIAH is the author of both books. Captured by Grace teaches us that most Christians know that they are saved by grace, but some of us don't realize that we live by grace everyday. The lessons in the book will show us how we can apply the principles of God's grace to our lives. Please let Neal know if you are interested in joining either of these studies, so he can order enough books for all of us. A Life Beyond Amazing shows us how we can be the person God has intended us to be. There is a better way to experience life for all of us. It uncovers God's strategy for and challenges us to make nine important decisions that will transform our lives.

“The Way of the Righteous”

*“The Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.”*

Psalm 1:6

1) The way of the righteous chooses LIFE.

¹⁵See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, ¹⁸I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Deuteronomy 30:15-20

2) The way of the righteous welcomes LOVE.

¹Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker—
²also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home: ³Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. ⁷Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people. ⁸Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, ⁹yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—¹⁰that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. ¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. ¹³I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. ¹⁴But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. ¹⁵Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever—¹⁶no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord. ¹⁷So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. ²⁰I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

Philemon 1-21

3) The way of the righteous follows LOYALTY.

²⁵Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ²⁶“If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. ²⁷And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? ²⁹For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, ³⁰saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' ³¹“Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. ³⁴“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? ³⁵It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” Luke 14:25-35