



IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

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March 22, 2026

"Take a Faith Based Risk"

Peter gets unfairly criticized. He is the disciple who denied Jesus three times, but he is the only one who got close enough to Jesus to get caught. He is the disciple who impulsively cut off Malchus's ear when the lynch mob came to arrest Jesus, but he is the only one who came to Jesus' defense. He is the disciple who sank in the Sea of Galilee, but he is the only disciple who walked on water. It's so easy to criticize people from the comfortable confines of the boat. Basically, there are two kinds of people: creators and critics – those who get out of the boat and walk on water and those who sit in the boat and criticize the water walkers.

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When everything is said and done, our greatest regrets will be the God-ordained risks we did not take. Jesus said, 'The Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it.' What do you believe God is leading you to do? What is the persistent prompting of the Holy Spirit urging you to do? Do it. Failing to take a faith-based risk is like permanently misplacing a piece from the jigsaw puzzle of your life. It leaves a disappointing hole. When we reach the end of our lives, our biggest regrets will be those missing pieces. So today, go ahead and take a faith-based risk. When making important decisions, especially when they can affect the lives of others, the Bible says you should do two things. First, count the cost. That means you should evaluate and investigate, and you should seek guidance and counsel. *'The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice' (Proverbs 12:15).*

How certain should you be before you move forward? In his book, *The Next Generation Leader*, Pastor Andy Stanley writes: *'Generally speaking, you are probably never going to be more than 80 per cent certain. Waiting for greater certainty may cause you to miss an opportunity.'* What are you waiting for? A guarantee that you won't make mistakes? That you won't be criticized or experience embarrassment? If so, you will get nowhere.

When you have done all that wisdom demands, you must trust God and take a faith-based risk. If you don't, you will end up living with regret. In a research study done by two Cornell University psychologists, they learned that time is a major factor in what we regret. We typically regret our actions over the short term. But over the long term, we are inclined to regret our inactions. The study found that in an average week, action regrets were somewhat higher than inaction regrets – 53 percent to 47 percent. But when people think about their lives as a whole, inaction regrets exceed action regrets 84 percent to 16 percent. In other words, you will not regret the errors you made as much as you will the God-ordained opportunities you missed. So, go ahead and take a faith-based risk. Gates are defensive devices, and storming those gates requires offensive measures. Think of the church as a battering ram. Instead of complaining about the culture, we need to present better options. We must produce higher-caliber films and compose more extraordinary music, write more notable books, and start superior schools and form better businesses. The old saying indicates we should stop cursing the darkness and start lighting some candles.

In *Roaring Lambs*, Robert Briner writes: 'Why not believe that one day the most critically acclaimed director in Hollywood could be an active Christian layman in his church? Why not hope that the Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting could go to a Christian journalist on staff at a major daily newspaper? Is it really too much of a stretch to think that a major exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art could feature the works of an artist on staff at one of our fine Christian colleges? Paul didn't criticize the philosophers on Mars Hill and tell them they were going to hell. Pointing to their altar to the unknown God, he indicated, *'I've come to tell you who He is, and His name is Jesus.'* What was the result? *'Some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter"'*. Go ahead; take a faith-based risk and see what happens.

PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS

Please call the office 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
22 9:00am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Blended Worship Service	23	24 10:00am Push Prayer Spring Break—No Preschool	25	26	27	28

March Celebrations

Stewardship Snapshot

Happy Baptism Birthday!

Mar 22

David Merchantz

Happy Anniversary

Mar 25

Peter & Donna Wasilkoff

March 15th

20 Worshipped, 19 Communed
5 Watched Online
 25 Total Worshipped

Financial Support

\$1,760.00 General Fund Offering

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. We are always looking for people to join us in prayer to our Lord.

PUSH PRAYER will be available on Zoom now for any of our out-of-towners and/or shut-ins to join us., I will email the link on Monday afternoons or Tuesday mornings, so it would be easier for you to find the email in your inbox. Just click on the link and it will connect you to the group. Please note that this is a recurring link for the meeting, so if I don't send it out right away, or you don't see it in your inbox, you can save and use this link over again in Zoom. **Please see below for the Zoom info for the PUSH PRAYER on March 24th.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84076099900?pwd=d3BxLBWbTizRVpuSGhgTXc2dGRldz09>

Meeting ID: 840 7609 9900 Passcode: 427470

Join Zoom Meeting—One tap mobile

+13126266799,,84076099900#,,,,*427470# US (Chicago)

+13092053325,,84076099900#,,,,*427470# US

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

DEVOTION OF THE WEEK ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! *Hebrews 9:14*
 I beg of you, my Lord, to remove anything which separates me from you, and you from me. Remove anything that makes me unworthy of your sight, your control, your discipline; of your speech and conversation, of your benevolence and love. Cast from me every evil that stands in the way of my seeing you, hearing, tasting, savoring, and touching you; fearing and being mindful of you; knowing, trusting, loving, and possessing you; being conscious of your presence and, as far as may be, enjoying you. This is what I ask for myself and earnestly desire from you. Amen.

VERSE OF THE MONTH ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. *John 3:16-17*

Living Word News

SAVE YOUR PAPER TOWEL TUBES for our VBS program this summer. Mrs. Diana will have the kids make rain sticks out of them. As your paper towels run out, please save the cardboard tubes for her, you can bring them in at any time. There is a box on the desk in the fellowship hall for you to drop them into. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEETING was this past Thursday evening, among the topics that were discussed was the financials, preschool and possible improvements to our property.

THE ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT is scheduled for Palm Sunday, March 29th following our worship service. We already have over 50 kids registered and I am sure that number will grow as it gets closer. This is rain or shine, so we are praying the good Lord will provide some warmer weather and some sunshine for this great outreach event. She has already ordered all the items she needs to fill the eggs that we have collected over the years and she will be spending most of her Spring Break filling eggs, and I am sure Kyle will be helping her when he gets home from school some of those days, lol.



Easter Egg Hunt
Sunday, March 29th
@ 11:30

Registration is now open
and required

Good Friday Service
April 3rd at 6:30 pm

Tenebrae

A SERVICE OF SHADOWS

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE will be at 6:30 pm on April 3rd, and then we will have our celebration Easter service at 10 am on Easter morning.

Living Word News

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS looking for a good home. Mrs. Diana was going thru her classroom and found some stuff that she does not need, so they are on the narrow cabinet by the window in the fellowship hall. Please feel free to help yourself.

JAZZ BAND CONCERT will be held at the North & Maple Restaurant located at 18401 N. Creek Drive in Tinley Park. (Basically right by some of the hotels west of Harlem). It will be on April 1st at 7:00 pm. Jim McKinney is one of the members of the band. If you are planning on attending, it is highly recommended that you make reservations prior to April 1st. The concert itself is free.

Mission of the Month

AND THEN WE HAD DOGS HERE On March 8th, we hosted the Lutheran Church Charities K-9 Comfort Dogs. Jael and Michael were here providing us with love and comfort. Yes, we were able to pet the loving and caring puppies before and after the service. Lutheran Church Charities will of course be our Mission of the Month for all of March. Michael and Jael have been very busy, they were in Kankakee and Aroma Park, IL along some of their friends comforting all of the victims from the tornadoes that had hit both of those areas.

When a powerful EF-3 tornado tore through Kankakee County, IL, and into Indiana on March 10, it left behind more than destruction—it left families overwhelmed, grieving, and searching for where to begin. Within hours, Lutheran Church Charities was on the ground. Through its Disaster Response Ministry, Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) volunteers quickly mobilized from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Kankakee, IL, helping families sift through what remained of their homes, clear massive amounts of debris, and begin the long road to recovery. In hard-hit neighborhoods like Aroma Park, teams didn't just work—they stayed. They listened to survivors' stories, offered prayer, and brought comfort in moments of deep loss. One homeowner, after losing everything, shared she felt "lost and disoriented," but found hope in the presence of volunteers who came alongside her in her time of need. At the same time, in nearby Indiana communities, LCC's K-9 Comfort Dog Ministry was helping children process the trauma. As schools reopened, students found moments of peace and joy, hugging comfort dogs, sharing their stories, and simply being kids again. One child who lost everything still said with confidence, "We still have Jesus." From clearing fallen trees to comforting hurting hearts, the response continues—because the need does too.



SPRING BREAK is next week for our preschoolers. Even though there will be no school that week for them, they will still have something to keep them busy while they're at home. Mrs. Diana will be letting them adopt a rubber duck to take home and take care of while their on break. Each child will get to pick their own special rubber duck to adopt with their own adoption certificate as well. and each duck will have their own special coop to go to their new home. They will also be keeping track of how they take care of their ducks throughout the week.



PRESCHOOL WISH LIST on Amazon. Mrs. Diana had created a wish list on Amazon last month. The past few years, Diana has been supplying all of the items that her classroom has needed throughout the school year without wanting to be compensated for it. We all know how expensive that can get, so in order to help her out a little, here is a wish list on Amazon. Here is the link to the list she has created:

https://www.amazon.com/registries/gf/guest-view/20NAPMBATD5WA?ref=cm_sw_r_apann_ggr-subnav-share_MNF6H1V8W4DMC469VA9T&language=en-US This isn't mandatory of course, and if you happen to find somethings cheaper elsewhere, then by all means feel free to buy them where the items are cheaper. Some of the items on the list are under \$10. Thank you to the ones who bought some of the items, the children are having a blast with them. As a reminder, please keep your receipts and turn them in to me, so I can add the amounts to your tax statements. If you need me to email you the link, just let me know. As always thank you for your overwhelming generosity and supporting our preschool. As you can see, there's Magic Paint Books, Play-Dough, Play-Dough accessories and tools, stickers, a magnetic board for the classroom door, and classroom equipment.

 <p>0 of 1 Purchased 4-Tier Clear Acrylic Paper... 4.7 ★★★★★ (134) Save 19% \$28⁹⁹ (\$7.25/count) Typical: \$35.99</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 1 Purchased Play Doh Modelin... 4.8 ★★★★★ (66.4K) \$7⁹⁹ (\$0.80/count)</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 1 Purchased Crayons and Markers 4.8 ★★★★★ (1.1K) \$49⁹⁹</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 4 Purchased Flybar Hopper Bal... 4.6 ★★★★★ (2.8K) Limited time deal \$13⁴⁹ List: \$14.99</p> <p>Edit Item</p>
 <p>0 of 1 Purchased LiKee Open Ended... 4.6 ★★★★★ (173) \$9⁹⁹</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 1 Purchased YOHOOLYO... 4.5 ★★★★★ (47) \$23⁹⁹</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 1 Purchased First Magic Painting Under the Sea 4.7 ★★★★★ (243) \$7⁸⁵ List: \$9.99 You Earn: 8 pts</p> <p>Edit Item</p>	 <p>0 of 1 Purchased First Magic Paintin... 4.3 ★★★★★ (87) \$7⁹⁹ List: \$9.99 You Earn: 8 pts</p> <p>Edit Item</p>

“I Cry to You, Lord”

“I cry to you, Lord... I wait for the Lord... Put your hope in the Lord!”
Psalm 130:1b, 5a & 7a

1) “I cry to you, Lord, in the VALLEY OF DRY BONES.”

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. ³ He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “Sovereign LORD, you alone know.” ⁴ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!’ ⁵ This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶ I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.” ⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” ¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. ¹¹ Then he said to me: “Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’” ¹² Therefore prophecy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. ¹⁴ I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.’”

Ezekiel 37:1-14

2) “I wait for you, Lord, in the REALM OF THE SPIRIT.”

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. [Romans 8:1-11](#)

3) “I hope in you, Lord, in the GRAVEYARDS OF LIFE.”

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. ²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” ... ³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.” ⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.” ⁴⁹ Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. ⁵³ So from that day on they plotted to take his life. [John 11:17-45, 38-53](#)