



December 2022 Newsletter

"Communicating the Love of Jesus"

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m. Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

Living Word Lutheran Church

PO Box 242, New London, MN 56273 Located north of the New London Township Hall on Cty Rd 9 NE Phone: 320-354-4637

Email: pastor@livingwordlutheran.net Website: www.livingwordlutheran.net

Questions for Pastor...

"Why do we celebrate Christmas, since God didn't command us to do that."

It's true that nowhere in the Bible do we find God commanding us to take time out each year to commemorate the birth of His Son. (Likewise there are no commands to celebrate Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. Neither is there a command to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection - although the early Christians set the example of celebrating it every week by gathering for worship on Sunday.)

So, why do we set aside time every year to celebrate Christmas and these other events?

There are several reasons, but the chief ones are found in Exodus chapter thirteen in God's explanation to the Israelites about why they are to celebrate the Passover every year:

On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.' This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the Lord is to be on your lips. For the Lord brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year....

"In days to come, when your son asks you, 'What does this mean?'
say to him, 'With a mighty hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out
of the land of slavery. When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go,
the Lord killed the firstborn of both people and animals in Egypt. This
is why I sacrifice to the Lord the first male offspring of every womb
and redeem each of my firstborn sons.' And it will be like a sign on
your hand and a symbol on your forehead that the Lord brought us
out of Egypt with his mighty hand."

In short, commemorating on a yearly basis certain things God has done is a way to:

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- 1. Force us to never forget about what God did!
- 2. Force us to tell our kids about what God did!

And, I would add, that yearly Sunday School Christmas programs force our kids to remind us of what God did!

Quite often, unless we have a day scheduled on the calendar that forces us to stop and remember what God has done, well, thanking Him and telling our kids (and grandkids) about it will be a "good intention" that never becomes reality.

So, please take time out to be reminded (and to tell your kids) that Christmas isn't really about Santa and getting material presents. It's about the day that God came to earth to be present with us in the person of His Son Jesus!

Thanks for asking! Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

Who Can You Invite?...



Two of the prophesies about the Messiah talk of Him as being a "Light to the Gentiles." People who are living without Jesus are living in the dark- and that's no way to live!

Those of us who believe that Jesus is truly the "Light of the World" (and

our only Savior) have the privilege of being like "mirrors" - reflecting the Light of Jesus to those around us.

One great way we can reflect that Light is by a simple invitation to friends, neighbors, relatives. Invite them to join you for one of our special services this Christmas.

Who can you invite? Pray about it. Ask God to give you the words and opportunity. Then just do it. Ask them to come with you. Offer to pick them up. (And if they don't take you up on your invitation,, keep praying for them and for another opportunity to invite.)

- The Sunday School Christmas Program -December 18 @ 10am
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship -December 24 @ 5pm

Opportunities for Growth...

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Sunday mornings at 9:00
Join us for coffee and God's Word!

Monthly Morning Women's Study:

Wednesday, December 14th @ 10:00 a.m. All women are invited to join us!

Evening Women's Study

Wednesdays @ 6:30 at Violet Dauk's home



Men's Study

Tuesdays @ 6:30

No Study on December 27th

Who can you invite to join you?

Small Group Study...



Coming in February:

"I Can Only Imagine"

(Based on the movie)

We are looking for people willing to host a small group study at your house (or a coffee-house or ???).

It's a great opportunity to invite friends or relatives. Pastor will go through the study with the hosts in January, then you will host your

own study during Lent.

Please talk to Pastor if you have any questions or would like to host a study. Thanks!

"Participate" in Worship from home...

If you can't be here in person: Watch on our YouTube channel with Sunday services being livestreamed at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG9eU-

VvIJEU22yCYxbhwjg/featured

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Page 5 | Sunday School News...

- Christmas Program practice: continues Dec. 4th and 11th during the Sunday School Hour.
- We will have a special practice
 WEDNESDAY Night December 14th!

We will have Pizza at 5:45 and then begin program practice from 6:15 -7:15!



 "Follow the Star" Children's Christmas Program: is December 18, during the 10:00 worship service

Cookies and Coffee will be provided after service!

NO Sunday School on December 25, Christmas Day.

Operation Christmas Child...

32 Shoe boxes !!!

"Thank you to all who packed a shoe box and to all those who provided a monetary donation for shipping! We were able to fill 32 boxes!"



Mona Hjelle

High School Youth Study...

Wednesday, December 7th @ 5:00 -

High School Youth Study

At Freedom Center office, Willmar (Becky's work-

place)

Our Study:



YOUTH

Bingo Prizes Needed

(For Friendship Sunday in February)

If you have something that would be a good "prize," please talk to Marcia Welsh

Mark Your Calendars...

Voters' Assembly:

Sunday, December 11 Following Worship
Our Fall Assembly is for the purpose of Approving 2023 Budget and
Goals

Mission & Ministry Team

Thursday, December 8th @ 6:30 p.m. Elders' Team @ 5:30 prior to MMT

Building Committee

- Met in November to finalize the wording of the letter and questionnaire that will be mailed to everyone late winter as part of the Sanctuary Feasibility Study
- NEXT Meeting. Thursday, December 29th @ 6:30

Women's Retreat

is scheduled for May 19-21, 2023

@ Willow Ridge Retreat Center in Hutchinson, MN

More details to come!!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

(Saturday, December 24 @ 5:00 pm)

- The entire service is done by candlelight.
- The Christmas Story from Luke chapter two is interspersed with Christmas Carols
- The Lord's Supper is Celebrated

Please pray about who you can invite to join you!



Church Choir...

Sings on CHRISTMAS EVE ...

Please join us after Sunday Worship as we practice for singing on Christmas Eve. (The only requirement is the ability to "make a joyful noise.")

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Page 7 Email Wisdom...

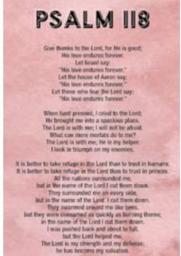
know...

Psalm 118 Did you

1) Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible.

- Before Psalm 118, Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the

 Rible
- Just after Psalm 118 is the longest chapter: Psalm 119
- There are 594 chapters both before and after Psalm 118?
- If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters.



6) Psalm 118:8 happens to be the middle verse of the entire Bible. The middle verse would have an important message, don't you think? Well, here it is:

"It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man."
(Psalm 118:8)

Confirmation News...

Confirmation classes:

Wednesday,

6:00 - 6:50 p.m. for 6-7th Graders

7:00 - 7:50 p.m. for 8-9th Graders

December 14:

- 5:45 Pizza
- 6:15 Students in Christmas Program have practice

- All other students fill candy bags

December 28: No Class

Please check the Parent Helper Schedule

Parents take turns helping out at class

Also Check: The PowerPoint Clicker-Person Schedule

Each student takes a turn operating the "clicker" that changes the PowerPoint screens during Sunday Worship.

That for a day:

Miscellaneous Notes...

Food Pantry Reminder

Please remember to bring your donations for the Food Pantry on the 2nd Sunday of each month. Place them in the purple container by the door at church. Thank to everyone for donating!

Check out our "Free Stuff" Table

Here's just a sampling of what you'll find:

- LOTS of things for kids to take home!
- The Portals of Prayer



SERMONS ONLINE •)

Recorded videos of Sermons

Sermons can be found in on our Living Word YouTube channel (New London Living Word) at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG9eU-VVIJEU22yCYxbhwig/videos

Nov 6 "What do we owe to 'Caesar' (Our Government)?"

Nov 13 "Giving Yourself to God Part 1 - Your Attitude"

Nov 20 "Giving Yourself to God Part 2 - Your Treasure"

Nov 27 "Giving Yourself to God Part 3 - Your Thanks"

Still Available: Direct Deposit for Your Offerings

Living Word has the option of an electronic option for making regular offerings. Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account.

Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation.

If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis.

An authorization form and a "Frequently Asked Questions" flyer are available from the church office.



Portal of Prayer Daily Devotionals

For January-March

Will be in mailboxes December 18

NOTE: We will have a sign-up sheet where you can let us know if you use the Portals of Prayer. We'll only be ordering future issues for those who indicate that they use them. Thanks!

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Remember to use "The Prayer Force"

Please continue to call, text (320-220-1816) or email (pastor@livingwordlutheran.net) prayer requests to Pastor David for the Prayer Force prayer chain to include in their prayers. Thanks!

And an Invitation to Join our "Prayer Force"

Being a part of our prayer chain is a HUGELY important - and very simple - way you can serve God and His people! When a request to pray comes in, Pastor forwards it via text message (or email for those who don't have a cell phone). Then you simply include that request in your prayers. Text Pastor today and tell him "Yeah, I can do that!" Thanks!

Please Remember to Pray At 11:09 Every day

(inspired by Luke 11:9: "So I say to you, Ask and it will be given to you; Seek and you will find; Knock and the door will be opened to you")

Remember to take a time-out to PRAY for things like ... these VBS Prayers:

- · People you can invite to Christmas Eve worship or
- The Sunday School Christmas Program
- . God to open people's hearts to the Hope, Peace and Joy of Jesus
- Thanking God for sending His Son to live among us!
- . Thanking God that Jesus is still Immanuel God with us!
- Safe travel (and good weather for traveling)
- For those who lost loved ones this past year.
- An "Attitude of Gratitude" everyday not just on Thanksgiving Day
- Asking God's continued guidance for our Building Committee.
- Asking God to humble you, seek Him and repent (2 Chronicles 7:14)
- Thanking God that His Word is Truth amidst the lies of the world.
- Protection from the deceitful messages Satan sends your way
- Opportunities to Share God's Love in Practical Ways.
- God's protection, wisdom & courage for government leaders
- The ministry of the Jastrams in Japan and for comfort and peace at the loss of Pastor Jastram's mother.



We STILL have extra batteries

from our outreach!

Please pick some up for your family - and to give to neighbors and friends - from the "Free Stuff" table at church.

Email Inspiration...

The Legend of The Candy Cane

According to the legend of the candy cane, this candy was first created back in the 18th century. At that time, in certain areas of Europe, there was said to be a ban on public displays of Christianity. Christians were oppressed and no Bibles or crosses could be owned at the time. One man found this oppression distressing and wished he could share the love of Jesus and the joy of Christmas with the rest of the world. When Christmas came around, children didn't get to see nativity scenes or enjoy learning about the truth of Christmas. As a candy maker, this man prayed to find a way that he could offer local children a Christmas gift that would allow him to communicate the real story of Christmas.

His prayer led to an idea--The Candy Cane.

- The Shepherd's Staff: He chose to make the candy cane in the shape of a shepherd's staff. After all, Jesus is the shepherd to his followers and the Bible notes that the "sheep" would hear His voice and follow him (Psalm 23:1, John 10:11, John 10:27-30, Isaiah 40:11).
- The Letter J for Jesus: Not only was the candy cane in the shape of a staff, but when held upside down, it formed a "J," which stood for Jesus (Luke 1:31, Matthew 1:21).
- He is A Rock: The candy maker chose hard candy for the candy cane, which was done to remind children that Jesus was our "rock," dependable and strong (Psalm 31:3).
- By His Stripes: Wide red stripes were added to the candy cane, representative of the crucifixion and the blood Jesus shed for our sins.
- Red-His Shed Blood: Through his blood, we are given salvation and life (Revelation 1:5, John 3:16, Luke 22:20).
- White-Purification from Sin: There are also white stripes on the candy cane, which represents the holiness, and purity of Jesus, who was sinless (I John 1:7).
- Sweet Fragrance of Christ: Peppermint was the flavor that the
 candy maker chose for the candy cane. Peppermint was very similar to hyssop, which was used for sacrifice and purification in the
 Old Testament, reminding us of the sacrifice that Jesus made for
 us. It also reminds us of the spices brought by the Wise Men when
 they came to visit Jesus (Psalm 51:7, John 10:29, Matthew 2:11)
- Broken For Us: Of course, when the candy cane is eaten, it is often broken, which the candy maker meant as a reminder that when

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Jesus

Jesus was crucified, his body was broken (I Cor. 11:24).

 Love of Christ: The candy cane was also made to be given as a gift, representing the love of Jesus when he gave us the gift of salvation.

Although no one is quite sure if the legend of the candy cane is really true, the beauty of the legend is such a reminder of God's love for us around Christmas. In this legend, it was a way that the candy maker could tell the children the story of Christmas and still today, we have candy canes as a reminder of the real reason we celebrate Christmas.

Thank God For...

You've seen our sign board out by the road with the beginning of a sentence: "Thank God For...

" Each week we'd like to change the ending of that sentence to encourage people who drive

past to remember that God is the giver of all good things - especially things we take for granted.

In November we thanked God for...

- Freedom to Vote
- Veterans and Their Families
- Everything

Let Pastor know how you'd complete that sentence in December

Thank You...

 Thank you to Donna Sarsland for the 2 large Poinsettias given in memory of Carroll Sarsland.

If you have someone you'd like to offer thanks to, just email to webmaster@livingwordlutheran.net

Thank You from the Jastrams...

We are so happy to have you as part of our missionary team. Your support for LCMS mission work in Asia means a lot to us. Dan & Joan Jastram



THANK GOD FOR

AWESOME

PLAYGROUND

Read the current newsletter at

https://tinyurl.com/4zx6k954

Thot for a day:

Whenever I'm with my family and someone says, "Wow, 'family!" I reply, "Well, we left the ugly ones at home."

December 2022 - Daily Readings

We continue reading 120 of the most important accounts in the Bible We've listed the readings tha are found in *Know the Bible Now* (KTBN). You can also do the readings from your Bible. Simply read the chapters listed in parentheses. Record your insights from on the lines provided

NOTE: If you'd rather listen to the readings, Pastor has recorded them. You can find the link to the recordings on our website at the bottom of the home page, livingword other net

KTBN: pg 168 Israel & Judah in Exile (2 Kings 17,24-25)	
KTBN: pg 174 God's Promises to the Exiles (Ezekiel 8 & 36)	
KTBN: pg 178 Three Men in the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3)	
KTBN: pg 180 Daniel in the Lion's Den (Daniel 6)	
KTBN: pg 182 Daniel Sees Heaven (Daniel 7)	
ek of DECEMBER 11 KTBN: pg 190 A New Temple and Wall (Ezra & Nehemiah)	
KTBN: pg 190 A New Temple and Wall (Ezra & Nehemiah) KTBN: pg 196 Esther and the King (Esther 1-2) KTBN: pg 198 God Saves His People (Esther 3-8)	
KTBN: pg 190 A New Temple and Wall (Ezra & Nehemiah) KTBN: pg 196 Esther and the King (Esther 1-2) KTBN: pg 198 God Saves His People (Esther 3-8)	
KTBN: pg 190 A New Temple and Wall (Ezra & Nehemiah) KTBN: pg 196 Esther and the King (Esther 1-2) KTBN: pg 198 God Saves His People (Esther 3-8)	
	KTBN: pg 174 God's Promises to the Exiles (Ezekiel 8 & 36) KTBN: pg 178 Three Men in the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3) KTBN: pg 180 Daniel in the Lion's Den (Daniel 6)

	KTBN pg 218 The Birth of John (Luke 1)	
Dec 21'	KTBN pg 220 The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2)	
Dec 22	KTBN pg 222 The Visit of the Wise Men (Matthew 2)	- 12
Dec 23	KTBN pg 224 The Boy Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2)	
We	eek of DECEMBER 25	
Dec 26	KTBN: pg 230 John Baptizes Jesus (Matthew 3, John 1)	
Dec 27	KTBN pg 232 The Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4)	
Dec 28	KTBN: pg 234 Jesus Calls Disciples(John 1 & Luke 5)	
Dec 29	KTBN: pg 236 Jesus Changes Water to Wine (John 2)	
Dec 30	KTBN: pg 238 Jesus Clears the Temple (John 2)	
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We	eek of JANUARY 1	
W e Jan 2	eek of JANUARY 1 KTBN pg 240 Jesus Teaches Nicodemus (John 3)	
Jan 2 Jan 3	KTBN pg 240 Jesus Teaches Nicodemus (John 3)	
Jan 2	KTBN pg 240 Jesus Teaches Nicodemus (John 3) KTBN: pg 242 Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4)	

December 2022 - Living Word Lutheran - Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - YOUTH & ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP w/Communion	5	6 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	7 5:00 - H.S. YOUTH STUDY 6:00 - 6-7th CONFIRMATION 6:30 - WOMEN'S STUDY 7:00- 8-9th CONFIRMATION	8 MISSION Winistry 5:30 - ELDERS' TEAM 6:30 - MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM	9	10
11 VOTERS' ASSEMBLY 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - YOUTH & ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:30 - VOTERS' ASSEMBLY	12	6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	14 10:00 - LWML & WOMEN'S STUDY 6:15 - CHRISTMAS PGM. PRACTICE (Pizza @ 5:45) 6:30 - WOMEN'S STUDY	• Sun	Supper Date day, Decemb stmas Eve, D	
18 CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - YOUTH & ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE	19	20 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	21 6:00 -6-7th CONFIRMATION 6:30 - WOMEN'S STUDY 7:00- 8-9th CONFIRMATION	22	23	5:00 CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP W/communion
25 10:00 - CHRISTMAS WORSHIP	KKE+11	27	28	6:30 - BUILDING COMMITTEE	30	New Year's Eve
Jan 1 NEW YEAR 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - YOUTH & ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP	Jan 2	Jan 3 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	Jan 4 6:00 -6-7th CONFIRMATION 6:30 - WOMEN'S STUDY 7:00- 8-9th CONFIRMATION	Jan 5	Jan 6	Jan 7

Upcoming Schedules...

After-Worship Fellowship

We've had requests to re-start our after-worship fellowship time (complete with coffee, juice, and maybe even goodies).

COORDINATOR NEEDED

Here's what that would involve:

- + Putting together a rotating schedule of Fellowship Servers.
- + Reminding servers of their date to serve.
- + Making sure there are cups, plates, napkins, etc... to use. If you could take on this ministry to our congregation, there are LOTS of folks who would be extremely grateful for your effort!

Usher Schedule

Dec 4 Wendy & Lonny Robbin

Dec 11 Open

Dec 18 Larry Levin & Chuck Weflen

Dec 24 Open Dec 25 Open

USHERS NEEDED AGAIN:

Since we are back to "normal" after covid restrictions, we are in need of ushers to greet people at the door as well as to usher people to the altar for communion.

Please sign up at church on the table by the door (you can choose which type of ushering you are interested in)!

Scripture Readers

NOTE: Pastor David will read the Scriptures in Worship until COVID restrictions are eased

Confirmation Parent Helpers

	6-7th grade	8-9th grade
Nov 30	Foshaug	Foshaug
Dec 7	Hjelle	Dahl
Dec 14	PROGRAM PR	ACTICE
Dec 21	Knutson	Meis
Dec 28	NO CLASS	NO CLASS

Elders

Dec 4, 11,	Joe & Duane
Dec 18, 24, 25	Steve & Scott

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Page 17 Custodian

Dec Jamie & Laurel Iverson Jan Volunteer Needed

PowerPoint Operator

Dec 11 Anna Sharp

Dec 18 S.S. Program

Jan 1 Jonah Sharp

Dec 25

Carson Sawatzky

Make A Meal Volunteers See "New Make-a-Meal Program" Page for details

(Volunteers needed - please talk to

Altar Guild

Nursery

Mona H.)

Dec Mona Hielle Mona Hielle

Communion Bread Maker

Dec 4 Ella Alex Dec 24 Jan 1 Troy

Accompanying Musicians

Dec 4 Sharon Willen Dec 11 Pam Johnson Dec 18 Christmas Program Dec 24 ScottWachter Dec 25 Scott Wachter

Seen on Church Signboards...

Our World Really Needs... A "Stable" Influence

Church Mice.





December Discipleship Verse...

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). Matthew 1:23

A Minute for Couples...

(from the Prepare-Enrich blog)

This time of year we talk a lot about gratitude and thankfulness, which are great concepts to keep top of mind year round. Research has shown that feelings of gratitude alone can have positive effects on a person's wellbeing. But that doesn't mean it has to stop there! Have you considered how you might turn simply being grateful into something more? You probably already know the answer.

Giving back, donating, volunteering, pitching in—whatever you want to call it—is not only great at an individual level, it's also an experience you can share with your partner. Beyond the obvious benefit of doing something good for others or for your community, here are five more reasons to give back together.

1. Strengthen your bond over shared values

There's a good chance that you and your spouse share common values. Expressing those values through giving back or volunteering is an impactful way to solidify that bond. Sometimes, you might find yourselves getting caught up in the daily grind, losing sight of values you hold dear. Finding a way to give back with your partner can help you both refocus yourselves on the things that truly matter.

2. You'll model generosity for your children and family.

If you have children, you know how important it is to set a good example for them. You might tell them about the value in helping others, but nothing compares to actually showing them through your own actions and making it a regular part of your lives. Maybe you volunteer as a family for church events throughout the year or you have the kids choose gifts to donate each holiday season. Even if you don't have children, you can spread the spirit of giving throughout your immediate or extended families. You might invite them to join you and your spouse or pass along opportunities for them to donate their time, services, or other resources. However you choose to do it, it's a great way to amplify your impact.

3. You can establish a meaningful shared activity.

If you're on the hunt for a new date night idea, volunteering together can be a powerful choice. You're not only spending quality time together, you're doing something meaningful that has the potential to fill your cups. What starts out as one date might turn into in ongoing activity that you share, which has the benefit of fostering more connection, intimacy, and friendship between you.

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4. You'll spur more positive feelings in your relationship.
Research has shown that giving to others actually produces more feelings of happiness than receiving. It also elicits gratitude in both the giver and receiver, which may be contrary to what you'd expect. So when you and your spouse participate in giving back or volunteering together, those positive feelings carry over into your own relationship as well. You might notice that you feel and express more gratitude and kindness with each other, which ultimately has a positive effect that ripples throughout your marriage.

5. You can give back in your own unique way.

The great thing about giving is you can do it in a way that truly speaks to each of you. There is no "right" way, and when you and your spouse find the thing that clicks, it's becomes a unique expression of who you are as a couple. Maybe you're both book lovers, and you organize book drives or Little Free Libraries throughout your community. Perhaps you share a passion for gardening, so you grow extra fruits and veggies to donate to families in need. Incorporating something you're passionate about into giving back with your spouse is a winning combination all around.

Cultivating a grateful mindset can be the catalyst for a lot of positive changes, both within yourself and your relationship. But when you put that mindset into action through giving back, you spread those powerful effects exponentially.

Communion Notes...

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated in July on the 1st Sunday—December 4th plus on Christmas Eve, December 24th. We won't have communion on December 18 due to the Sunday School Program being held during worship.

On Christmas Eve we will come single-file to the front to receive the wafer from Pastor and the wine or grape juice from an Elder. On your way back to your seat everyone will have an opportunity to stop at the manger for a short prayer of thanks to God for being Immanuel: God With Us!

Reminders

- Those who are not comfortable coming to the altar should inform an Elder or Usher, and communion will be brought to you in your pew.
- Gluten-free bread wafers are available for those who have glutensensitive conditions. You will find these wafers in a separate cup in the communion tray.



Simple Ways to Lift Your Spiritual Life...

Share the Love of Jesus This Month

During the busy weeks prior to Christmas thoughtful Christians go out of their way to show their love for others. In fact, "Sharing the Love of Jesus in Practical Ways" is one of our Core Values at Living Word. Here are a few suggestions. You may think of more. The possibilities are limited only by your creativity.

- Babysit for a mom (or dad) while they shop.
- Shovel snow for someone who could use the help this winter.
- Invite at least one person to join you in worship Christmas Eve.
- Drive others to church for worship.
- "Adopt" someone in a care center or group home, not just for Christmas, but for an indefinite period of time.
- Use your special talents (what are they?) where needed.
- Invite someone over for dinner who will be alone on Christmas.
- Ask the Lord for guidance in using you in meaningful ways to bring glory to Him - He will direct you.

And Read The 120 Key Bible Narratives

(Or listen to Pastor read them on our website)

Refresh your memory about God's work in His world through these basics of the Christian faith, from Creation to John's Vision of Heaven. You'll find the readings listed on our Daily Readings page.

LWML News...

LWML MEETING:

Wednesday, December 14th at 10:00a.m. We will have a Christmas Devotion followed by Bible study. All ladies of the church are welcome to join us!

SHOES FOR MISSIONS:

A huge thank you to all who have donated!



This is a continuing fundraiser for Lutheran Island Camp. Please bring shoes, boots, slippers, sandals (in rubber banded pairs, or with shoestrings tied) to church, and place them in the SHOES FOR MISSIONS box near the entrance.

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NEW Make-A-Meal Program...

One of the best (and simplest) ways to share Jesus' love is by making a meal for someone who is going through a tough time.

On "Make-a-Meal Day" we made about 15 meals (tater tot hotdish and cookies). They are in the freezer at church ready to grab and take to someone you know who could use a meal. They even have a card attached

If you have any questions, please check with Marcia, otherwise, just grab a meal from the freezer and make someone's day!



After-Worship Fellowship

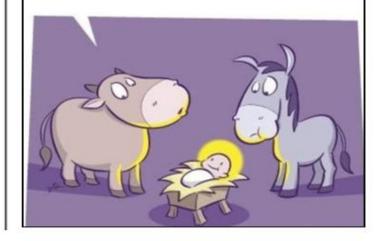
COOKIE-BAKING SCHEDULER NEEDED

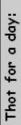


We have cookies to ready to bake, and volunteers to bake them. All we need is someone to come up with a baking schedule and let the bakers know when it's their turn to bake. Pretty easy!

If you could take on this ministry to our congregation, there are LOTS of folks who would be extremely grateful for your effort!

Dude, there's a baby in the salad...





Opportunities to Serve...

Help With Our Nursery

We need a couple more volunteers to help with our during-worship nursery (2-6 year olds). Please talk to Mona Hjelle if you can help.

We are also looking for a person to be the Make-a-Meal coordinator -

The coordinator is NOT responsible for making the meals, but rather notifies the meal makers when a meal is needed and then arranges for the meal to be delivered. If you could be that person, please talk to Pastor David. Thanks!

Remember to use our "We Prayed for You" program...

We'd like to send out a card or two each week to people we prayed for during worship.

We are currently in need of a volunteer to mail the cards. If you could help, talk to Pastor David



Help Record our Worship Services . . .

that we livestream and later upload our YouTube channel (New London Living Word). Talk to Pastor David if you can help out with this just one Sunday a month. (Hint: It's really not difficult - even Pastor figured it out!)

Remember the Teal's Rebate Program.

Teal's Grocery gives a 1% rebate to eligible organizations. There's a teal-colored box on the back-wall table where you can put in your receipts.



amazonsmile You shop. Amazon gives.

Donate to Living Word when you order from Amazon

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible smile.amazon.com purchases to Living Word. Use this link to have your purchases support Living Word: https://smile.amazon.com/ch/41-1513306

Living Word has been issued a \$15.85 donation as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between April 1 and June 30, 2022.

Custodian Volunteers Needed.

Pick Your Month for you (or your family) to be our Church Custodian:

We are still in need of volunteers for any month in 2023 Talk to our Trustee, Lonnie Robbin, to sign up or find out more details.



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Thank-Offering...

Special Yearly
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God commanded the Israelites to come to the temple once a year for a joyful celebration of the blessings God provided in the harvest. This harvest festival was called The Feast of Weeks.

Then celebrate the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the Lord your God has given you. Deuteronomy 16:10

With that in mind we will come together on Thanksgiving Eve for a special joyful celebration of the blessings God has provided us. We're each encouraged to bring a special freewill offering in proportion to how God has blessed us this past year.

Please pray about your Thank-offering proportion. Use the special Thank-Offering envelope to make your Thank-Offering. (Your yearly Thank-Offerings can be given any Sunday, if you are not able to attend the Thanksgiving Eve service.)

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand."

King David in 1 Chronicles 29:14

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ETERNAL LIFE, MY FAVORITE ... THANKS JESUS!

Poinsettias Welcome

Everyone is welcome to bring a poinsettia plant to place in the sanctuary for Christmas. You may bring the plant any time and set it on the counter. The Altar Guild will take care of it and place it around the altar.



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Why Poinsettias at Christmas?

Poinsettia plants are native to Central America, especially an area of southern Mexico known as 'Taxco del Alarcon' where they flower during the winter. There is an old Mexican legend about how Poinsettias and Christmas come together, it goes like this:

There was once a poor Mexican girl called Pepita who had no present to give the baby Jesus at the Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked to the chapel, sadly, her cousin Pedro tried to cheer her up. 'Pepita', he said "I'm sure that even the smallest gift, given by someone who loves him will make Jesus Happy."

Pepita didn't know what she could give, so she picked a small handful of weeds from the roadside and made them into a small bouquet. She felt embarrassed because she could only give this small present to Jesus. As she walked through the chapel to the altar, she remembered what Pedro had said. She began to feel better, knelt down and put the bouquet at the bottom of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into bright red flowers, and everyone who saw them were sure they had seen a miracle. From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night'.

The shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves are sometimes thought as a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red colored leaves symbolize the blood of Christ. The white leaves represent his purity.

Email Humor...

When she was about three years old, I began taking my daughter, Sally, fishing with me. Since she caught very little, I'd ask her if she'd like to reel in one of my fish. I figured this would give her the idea of how it was to be done, and keep her from getting disheartened and bored.

Just before her 13th birthday, we were out in the canoe. She was pulling in fish after fish, while I couldn't hook even one. Finally, after about her 12th fish, Sally turned to me and asked with a smile, "Would you like to reel in my next fish, Dad?"

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Story Behind The Song...

I Heard The Bells on Christmas Day

By the mid-1800s, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a household name, and his poems, like "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" and "The Song of Hiawatha" were memorized and quoted all over America.

But in 1863, it had been many years since he'd written an original verse. Longfellow was weary after years of hardship. His beloved wife had died in a tragic fire. Henry Longfellow's own burns were severe enough that he was unable even to attend his own wife's funeral. He stopped shaving on account of the burns, growing a beard that would become associated with his image. He fell into a deep depression and at times he feared that he would be sent to an asylum on account of his grief. That Christmas, he wrote in his journal: "How inexpressibly sad are all holidays."

A few years later, despite his deep conviction against violence, his oldest son, Charley, left this note in his house after stealing away to join the Union Army: "I have tried hard to resist the temptation of going without your leave but I cannot any longer."

Less than a year later, on December 1, 1863, Longfellow received a telegram that every parent during wartime dreaded: Charley had been injured in a skirmish with Confederate troops and was currently in a Virginia hospital. Knowing the poor conditions of battlefront medical stations, Longfellow immediately left his Boston home to search for his son.

After arriving, he spent three days searching the incoming wounded arriving at the train station, passing up and down the line of bleeding, bandaged men, limp on pallets packed into boxcars, until he finally saw a familiar face: Charley, the prodigal son, alive, but barely breathing.

After being rushed to medical care and stabilized, Charley was eventually allowed to return home to Boston. On Christmas Day, with his son still shivering with fever, possibly never to recover, Longfellow struggled with the terrible reality of the war that had torn his country apart...

On Friday, December 25, 1863, Longfellow—as a 57-year-old widowed father of six children, the oldest of which had been nearly paralyzed as his country fought a war against itself—wrote a poem seeking to capture the dynamic and dissonance in his own heart and the world he observes around him that Christmas Day.

He heard the Christmas bells ringing in Cambridge and the singing of

Thot for a day: I know. people

"peace on earth" (Luke 2:14), but he observed the world of injustice and violence that seemed to mock the truthfulness of this optimistic outlook.

With each line, he built a picture of darkness—and in the midst of it, hope. The theme of listening recurs throughout the poem, eventually leading to a conclusion of confident hope even in the midst of bleak despair as he recounts to himself that God is alive and righteousness shall prevail.

Within a decade (1872), the poem was put to music by the English organist John Baptiste Calkin

Charley did eventually recover, and he and his father were reconciled, but this wartime Christmas poem-turned-song still rings out a story of the triumph of hope over despair even today.

Though the middle verses are normally left out of the song, the entire original poem is as follows:

I heard the bells on Christmas Day Their old, familiar carols play, and wild and sweet The words repeat Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come, The belfries of all Christendom Had rolled along The unbroken song Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth The cannon thundered in the South, And with the sound The carols drowned Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

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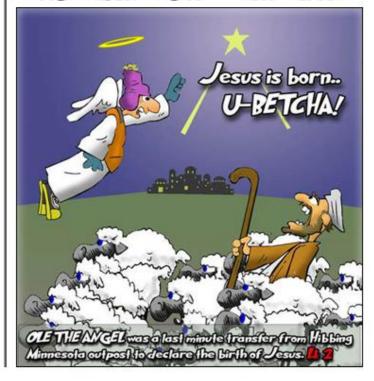
And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The Wrong shall fail, The Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men."

Editor's note: Many versions of this song are available to enjoy from Johnny Cash to Frank Sinatra to Bing Crosby to the Carpenters... One of my favorites of the "more traditional" performances is by The Petersens at https://youtu.be/uMpBt3fYfn8
A couple of other great "enhanced" versions that I enjoy are:

By Chris Tomlin at https://youtu.be/vHP_XXHJw2M
By Casting Crowns at https://youtu.be/M7670CXvPX0

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



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