

### **December 2023 Newsletter**

"Communicating the Love of Jesus" 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...

Do you have a favorite Christmas carol/song?

The answer to this question is like the answer to questions like, "What is your favorite Bible verse?" or "Which is your favorite book in the Bible?" I have lots of favorites. Which one I put at the top depends on the day - and what's going on that day. That means my answer tomorrow could be different than my answer today.



So, here (in no certain order) are a few thatgiven the day - could end up being my answer:

- "What Child is This" (My favorite tune from when I was a child)
- "Joy to the World"
   (The perfect way to end of a Christmas Program)
- "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"
   (As sung by the Charlie Brown kids)
- "What a Wonderful Beginning" (As sung by Kathy Mattea)
- "Good King Wenceslas" (Great tune, plus Wenceslas reminds me of Jesus)
- "Ding Dong Merrily on High"
   (As sung by Roger Whitaker what a voice!)
- "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (Great tune, plus my favorite title for Jesus)
- "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (Great words in vv3-4)
- "Silent Night"
   (I really like Mercy Me's upbeat version)

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 "O Holy Night" (Great tune that sets the perfect tone for Candlelight Service)

As of this moment, if I had to pick just one I'd choose "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" - even if it's not sung by the Charlie Brown kids! It's an amazing song in how it combines a joy-filled tune with words describing who Jesus is and the difference He makes for us: e.g. "God and sinners reconciled!"

I'm sure I'm missing some songs, so please don't ask "Don't you like \_\_\_\_\_?" There are only two that, when they come on the radio, I can't change the station fast enough: "Feliz Navidad" and "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer!"

Thanks for asking - and I love to hear about your favorites!

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

O, come let us adore Him...

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 17 @ 10:00 a.m.
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship -December 24 @ 5:00 p.m.

### Opportunities for Growth...



Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:00

Please join us for coffee and study of the Book of Romans

#### Monthly Morning Women's Study:

January 10th @ 10:00 a.m. All ladies are invited!

Evening Women's Study
Is on Break.

Men's Study

Tuesdays @ 6:30 (Come at 6:15 for food.) No study December 26



### 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...

- Fileen Bratsch
- Veterans
- Family Gatherings

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

### "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-

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### Fall Voters' Assembly...

#### Living Word's 2024 Goals:

- Continue the Make A Meal program. (It is very successful!)
- Creating a Visitors Table
   (Give-Aways along with church and prayer ministry info)
- Bring back the 'Secret Paul' Program
   (Adults "adopting" a kid to pray for, send cards etc...)
- A Concert!! (Summer...outdoor)
- Chili Cook-Off (Will be January 20)
- Lawn/ property beautification
- Eliminating clutter on the property (better storage??)
- Develop a structure to ushering
- Structured/consistent calendar for cleaning church (volunteers)

A church that prays AND plays together stays together!

#### FALL VOTERS' ASSEMBLY:

Approved the above goals and the MMT's proposed budget for 2024

### Pastor is Planning a Membership Class...

Please talk to him if you are interested in finding out about membership at Living Word.

### Upcoming Fellowship Outings...

#### Celebrate Birthdays

We will celebrate December and January Birthdays together in early January. Watch for date, time and location details

### Smoke-Detector Battery Outreach...



We Have LOTS of Batteries left from Our Annual Smoke-Detector Battery Giveaway

Please take some from the "Free Stuff" Table for your family and friends!

That for a day: Sometimes

### 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 a back table. The Altar Guild will take care of it and place it around the altar.

### Building Committee Update...

Record your vision for our new sanctuary... on this poster in the fel-

on this poster in the fellowship area!

We want to find out what things you would love to see included as we move forward with our planning.



#### OUR NEXT BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING:

Thursday, December 14 @ 6:00 (Prior to MMT)

### Thank You...

- to EVERYONE who prayed for us before and after my sinus surgery. You have no idea what a blessing it was to know there were so many people knocking on God's door on our behalf! May God bless each of you as much as he's bless us through you!
   Pastor David (& Violet)
- to Wendy and Lonny for all the time an effort spent finding cabinets for church!
- to Derek Olson for getting and running new cable for our Power-Point projector!
- to Scott, Pam and Sharon for so faithfully accompanying us!

Please email <u>webmaster@livingwordlutheran.net</u> if there's someone you'd like us to extend congratulations to.

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### Christmas Program...

#### Children's Christmas program:

Sunday, December 17, at 10:00 "Love Came Down at Christmas"

Program practice: Sunday mornings @ 9:00.

Our final practice will be Wednesday, December 13.

Pizza at 5:45 and practice begins at 6:15!

No Sunday School December 24 or 31. Class will resume on January 7, 2024.



#### Save the Date:

"Baby Bottle Campaign"
to benefit Hope Pregnancy Center begins December 31.

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



#### Shoebox Wrap-Up:

Love Came Down

29 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 29 boxes!"

### Youth Events...

#### 11-12th Grade YOUTH:

11-12th Grade Bible Study meets every other Wednesday at 5 pm at Becky's office in Willmar (December 6th & 20th)



#### 9-10th Grade Youth

Meet Wednesday, December 13 to make banners for the Christmas Program. 5:45 for Pizza. 6:15 for Program Practice and Banner Making (for those not in the program)



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### 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:

- Kid's books
- December Newsletters
- October-December Portals of Prayer
- Smoke Detector batteries

#### Recorded videos of Sermons

Sermons can be found in on our Living Word YouTube channel (New London Living Word) at

https://www.youtube.com/@newlondonlivingword8097/streams

- Nov 5 "Jesus died to make us holy. Here's how to act holy"
- Nov 12 "Clothes (of a spiritual nature) to have so you're ready for winter."
- Nov 19 "Using the Talents God's Given You"
- Nov 26 "Black Friday vs. Good Friday, Compare and Contrast"

#### 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.

### Choir News...



Will Sing at the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Please practice with us after Sunday worship this month.

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### LWML News...

Our next meeting and Bible study will be Wednesday, January 10th @ 10:00 a.m.

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#### SHOES FOR MISSIONS:



A huge thank you to all who have donated!
This is fund-raiser for Lutheran Island Camp. Please
continue to bring your good used shoes, slippers, or
boots to church. Collection tote is in the entry of the
church.

#### DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

Please join us on Saturday, December 2nd, at 10:00 a.m., to put up the Christmas tree, and to decorate the church. Everyone is welcome. Also please bring a dish to pass, or a snack to share





The Free to be Faithful® newsletter highlights important and relevant details on religious liberty issues that impact the rights of Christians to live faithfully.

In this issue, read about

- The truth about surrogacy and "Big Fertility."
- Lawsuits being filed by "detransitioners" who have suffered permanent damage after following the advice of medical professionals to take cross-gender hormones and undergo unnecessary surgeries.
- How families are being barred from adopting and fostering children because of their beliefs about gender and sexuality.

You can read the latest newsletter here:

https://resources.lcms.org/newsletters/free-to-be-faithful-fall-2023-newsletter/

Or... Pick up a copy at church

### Mark Your Calendars...

#### Mission & Ministry Team

December 14th @ 6:30 p.m. Elders' Team @ 5:300 prior to MMT Building Committee Meeting @ 6:00



#### Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17, at 10:00 "Love Came Down at Christmas" See page 7 for more info...

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship...

#### (Sunday, 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!



### Outreach Events...



#### Chili Cook Off!

January 20th (at church, of course) 4:30-6:00

1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes !!!

"Notorious judges"

This is a Living Word outreach event, so please invite friends to eat (and compete)!

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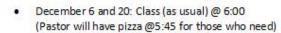
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### Confirmation News...





- December 13: Confirmation Service Project
  - 5:45 Pizza
  - 6:15 Students in the Christmas Program have practice
     All other students will make banners for the Program
- December 27: No Class
- Remember to check the "PowerPoint Clicker" schedule.



NOTE: We support both the <u>lastram</u>'s mission in Japan and the International Lutheran Council with our budgeted mission dollars. Below is a "Thank You" from the ILC.

Dear Rev. Dauk.

God's mission of salvation through His Son and by His Spirit continues until the Lord returns! The International Lutheran Council seeks to serve this mission by encouraging, strengthening, and promoting confessional Lutheran theology and practice around the world, and at the heart of all Lutheran theology is the gospel of forgiveness through the Savior Jesus.

We thank God for the ongoing gifts of Living Word Lutheran Church, supporting the mission and the work of the International Lutheran Council. Your donation of \$750, received November 16, 2023, will help us to continue and to expand our efforts.

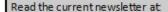
We hope you will keep up to date about what is happening in world Lutheranism by going to www.ILCouncil.org. Also feel free to contact us with questions, concerns, ideas, or referrals.

In Christ.

Rev. Dr. Detlev Schulz General Secretary, ILC

#### 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



https://tinyurl.com/2mvxjw5j



### Email Inspiration...

Each December, I vowed to make Christmas a calm and peaceful experience. I had cut back on nonessential obligations...extensive card writing, endless baking, decorating, and even overspending.

Yet still, I found myself exhausted, unable to appreciate the precious family moments, and of course, the true meaning of Christmas. My son, Nicholas, was in kindergarten that year. It was an exciting season for a six year old. For weeks, he'd been memorizing songs for his school's "Winter Pageant." I didn't have the heart to tell him I'd be working the night of the production. Unwilling to miss his shining moment, I spoke with his teacher. She assured me there'd be a dress rehearsal the morning of the presentation. All parents unable to attend that evening were welcome to come then. Fortunately, Nicholas seemed happy with the compromise.

So, the morning of the dress rehearsal, I filed in ten minutes early, found a spot on the cafeteria floor and sat down. Around the room, I saw several other parents quietly scampering to their seats. As I waited, the students were led into the room.

Each class, accompanied by their teacher, sat cross-legged on the floor. Then, each group, one by one, rose to perform their song.

Because the public school system had long stopped referring to the holiday as "Christmas," I didn't expect anything other than fun, commercial entertainment...songs of reindeer, Santa Claus, snowflakes and good cheer. So, when my son's class rose to sing, "Christmas Love," I was slightly taken aback by its bold title.

Nicholas was aglow, as were all of his classmates, adorned in fuzzy mittens, red sweaters, and bright snowcaps upon their heads. Those in the front row – center stage – held up large letters, one by one, to spell out the title of the song.

As the class would sing "C is for Christmas," a child would hold up the letter C. Then, "H is for Happy," and on and on, until each child holding up his portion had presented the complete message, "Christmas Love."

The performance was going smoothly, until suddenly, we noticed her; a small, quiet, girl in the front row holding the letter "M" upside down – totally unaware her letter "M" appeared as a "W". The audience of 1st through 6th graders snickered at this little one's mistake. But she had no idea they were laughing at her, so she stood tall, proudly holding her "W".

Although many teachers tried to shush the children, the laughter continued until the last letter was raised, and we all saw it together. A

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hush came over the audience and eyes began to widen. In that instant, we understood the reason we were there, why we celebrated the holiday in the first place, why even in the chaos, there was a purpose for our festivities.

For when the last letter was held high, the message read loud and clear: "CHRISTWAS LOVE" And. I believe. He still is!!

God certainly does work in mysterious ways!!

### Email Humor...

Because I couldn't unplug the toilet with a plunger, I had to dismantle the entire fixture. No small feat for a non-plumber! Jammed inside the drain was a purple rubber dinosaur, which belonged to my five-year-old son.

I painstakingly got all the toilet parts together again, the tank filled, and I flushed it. However, it didn't work much better than before!

As I pondered what to do next, my son walked into the bathroom. I pointed to the purple dinosaur I had just dislodged and told him that the toilet still wasn't working.

"Did you get the green one, too?" he asked.

#### \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

#### A Bad Day (Maybe you can relate)

Discovering that I'd overslept, I abandoned my usual morning routine and rushed out. In the van, though, I realized I had time to stop for a take-out coffee.

I got my coffee and returned to the van, only to find I had not only left it running but had locked it!

The day was going from bad to worse.

I returned to the shop, sheepishly explained my situation to the clerk and asked if I could borrow a broom.

I managed to open a side window and pop the lock on the back door using the broom handle. When I returned the broom, the clerk said, "I know you're having a bad day, but..."

"I know, I know," I interrupted. "You want to know how I can unlock my van with a broom."

"No," she said. "I wanted to tell you that your shirt is on inside out."

That for a day: Some people like

### A Minute for Couples...

(from the Prepare-Enrich blog)

#### Prep your Marriage for the Christmas Season

When it comes to "Christmas-season prep," you probably think about all the tasks and to-do's you need to complete. Decorating, baking, shopping, cleaning, inviting, traveling – whether you do it all or just a little, it can be a hectic time. Nonetheless, a lot of effort and energy goes into it every year.



#### Have you ever considered how you can prep your marriage for this time of year?

Preparing your marriage as you head into this stressful season gives you a strong foundation to lean on during what can be a relationship-straining time. Here are six ways to prep your marriage for a harmonious holiday season.

#### 1. Make sure your communication is in top-form.

Feeling stressed out? Worried about meeting all the family obligations? Dealing with difficult emotions? Being able to communicate with each other openly about where your head is at, what you're struggling with, or where you could use some extra help fosters connection while lightening the load. You'll feel less alone and give each other the opportunity to offer support.

#### 2. Get aligned on your priorities.

The Christmas season can bring lots of conflicting demands and distractions. Taking time to think through what is most important for each of you can help you keep things in perspective. You might settle on one or two separate priorities, but don't forget to consider what matters most to you as a couple and as a family of your own. Maybe you want to focus on spending quality time with family and less on attending all the peripheral parties this year, or you want to incorporate volunteering into your holidays in some way. Having a conversation about this ahead of time ensures you're on the same page and are working towards the same goal. At the same time, this discussion will also shed light on where you may need to compromise. Which leads to...

#### 3. Be willing to meet in the middle.

If you find some of your priorities are conflicting, you'll need to be open to compromise. Whether it's whose family you'll celebrate with or whether you should host a New Year's Eve party, try to problem-

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solve as a team instead of negotiating to get what you want. Settle on a couple of options to try out that account for each of your priorities, and remember that you're not locked into one solution forever. Agree to check in with each other afterwards to talk about what worked and what didn't.

#### 4. Have the money talk.

Between gifts, travel, special activities, and the like, it's natural for conflict to brew up if you're not on the same page about money. Take time for a conversation about it. Even if you're usually pretty financially likeminded, maybe you want to do things differently this holiday season. If you tend to think about money differently throughout the year, and have figured out ways to compromise, consider how you can apply those tactics to the holiday season.

#### 5. Establish boundaries.

You've likely discovered that Christmas can bring lots of external pressure and obligations to celebrate in a certain way and do all the things. You can try to please everyone and do it all, but you may end up feeling burnt out and like you didn't even get to enjoy the holiday. Establishing boundaries helps protect the energy, time, resources, and priorities of

your own family. Boundaries might look like limiting the time spent at a relative's house, saying no to some invitations, or opting out of certain activities. Work together to figure out what feels right for you and your family. You may also want to



make a plan for sticking to your boundaries in the moment when you're feeling pressure or temptation to break them. Discuss where you're comfortable stretching them, where you're not, and how you can support each other throughout.

#### 6. Commit to enjoying the little moments.

Often the Christmas season can seem like it's all about doing things, going places, and fitting it all in. It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle. Don't forget to slow down and enjoy the quieter moments of connection with your spouse and family. Whether it's cozy evenings at home watching your favorite holiday movies or a hand-in-hand walk around the neighborhood to look at the holiday lights, remember that these things can be just as important and meaningful as the big plans and activities. Talk about how you can help each other keep this mentality at the forefront.

Put a "prep our marriage for Christmas" date on the calendar right now.

That for a day:

### December 2023 - Living Word Lutheran - Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 - PROGRAM PRACTICE - ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP w/Communion	4	6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	6 5:00 - H.S. YOUTH STUDY 6:00 - CONFIRMATION	Sunda     Sunda	pper Dates  y, November : y, November : sgiving Eve, N	
9:00 - PROGRAM PRACTICE - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE	11	12 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	13  10:00 - MEAL MAKING  6:15 - CHRISTMAS PGM. PRACTICE (Pizza @ 5:45)	14 5:30 - ELDERS' TEAM 6:00 - BUILDING TEAM 6:30 - MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM		16
9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY  10:00 - WORSHIP  11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE	18	19 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	5:00 - H.S. YOUTH STUDY 6:00 - CONFIRMATION	21	2	23
9:00 - ADULT STUDY  10:00 - WORSHIP 11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE  5:00 - CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP w/communion	Merry Christmas.	26	27	28	The Sinst Christian of Caulo C	
9:00 - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP	Jan 1, 2024!	Jan 2 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	Jan 3 6:00 - CONFIRMATION	Jan 4	Jan 5	Jan 6 EPIPHANY  Epiphany

### December 2023 - Daily Readings

This Month we continue our "100 - or so - Key Chapters of the Bible" readings.

Pastor records the readings (along with devotions based on the readings).

If you would like to receive these audio recordings daily, just email him: pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

	1 Kings 17-19
	2 Kings 2
	2 Kings 17
	2 Kings 25
	1 Chronicles 29
C	
	2 Chronicles 7
+0	2 Chronicles 7

Dec 19	Isaiah 7:10-14
Dec 20	Isaiah 9:6-7
Dec 21	Isaiah 11:1-10
Dec 22	Micah 5:2
Dec	24 Celebrate Jesus' Birth tonight at our 5:00 p.m. Candlelight Service We interrupt our chapter readings with readings about Jesus' birth:
Dec 25	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 26	Matthew1:18-25
Dec 27	John 1:1-14
Dec 28	Luke 2:21-40
Dec 29	Matthew 2:1-12
Dec Jan 1	31 This week we switch back to our Key Chapter readings Psalm 1
Jan 2	Psalm 19
Jan 3	Psalm23
Jan 4	Psalm 46
Julia	

Recordings of the Daily Readings can also be found on our website at: https://www.livingwordlutheran.net/devotions.htm

### Upcoming Schedules...

#### After-Worship Fellowship

We will have coffee / water and cookies at 11:15 after worship. Please join us when you can!



#### Usher Schedule

Dec 3 Wendy & Lonny Robbin Dec 10 Jack Kuppich & Joe Johnson Dec 17 Larry Levin & Jim Stinson Dec 24 Jason & Levi Miller

Christmas Eve Open Dec 31 Open

#### **USHERS NEEDED**

Since we have resumed gathering the offerings during worship, we are in need of more ushers to help with that. Please sign up at church if you could take a turn once ever month or so.

Thanks!

#### Scripture Readers

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

#### Elders

Scott & Steve Dec 3, 12 Duane & Kevin Dec 17, 24, Candlelight, 31

#### Custodian

December-Lonny Robbin

#### Nursery

(Volunteers needed - please talk to Mona H.)

#### Altar Guild

December Mona Hjelle

#### Power Point Clicker

Dec 3 Carter Dec 10 Parker Dec 17 Flla Dec 24 Trov Christmas Eve Open Dec 31 Open

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Confirm	nation Parent Helpers	Accompanying Musicians		
Dec 6	Wright	Dec 3	Sharon Willen	
Dec 20	Foshaug	Nov 10	Pam Johnson	
Jan 3	Hjelle	Nov 17	Sharon Willen	
Jan 10	Sarsland	Nov 24	ScottWachter	
		Candlelight	Scott Wachter	
Communion-Bread Maker		Dec 31	Pam Johnson	

Dec 24 Evelyn

#### Your special Thank-offering can still be given:

We're were 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

### Seen on Church Signboards...

Wondering What to Give Jesus for His Birthday?

Just Look in Your Mirror ...

The One at Home, Not on Your Car :)

### December Discipleship Verse...

"You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

### More Email Humor...

There was once a handyman who had a dog named Mace. Mace was a great dog except he had one weird habit: he liked to eat grass -- not just a little bit, but in quantities that would make a lawnmower blush. And nothing, it seemed, could cure him of it. One day, the handyman lost his wrench in the tall grass while he was working outside. He looked and looked, but it was nowhere to be found.

As it was getting dark, he gave up for the night and decided to look the next morning. When he awoke, he went outside and saw that his dog had eaten all the grass in the area, around where he had been working, and his wrench now lay in plain sight, glinting in the sun.

Going out to get his wrench, he called the dog over to him and said, "A grazing Mace, how sweet the hound, that saved a wrench for me."

THE RECTOR DROPS IN ON THE PAGEANT REHEARSAL



Fresh out of seminary, a young pastor was called to an associate position at a prestigious church. One Sunday early on, he was given the opportunity to preach. He prepared diligently - perhaps a bit too excited to use all the learning he'd acquired - and worked hard to make his words eloquent and smooth.

Shaking hands at the end of the service, he was approached by one of the older ladies who was known and respected in both the church and community.

"Pastor," she said with a smile, "your sermon was like the peace of God!"

The young preacher's grin widened and his chest puffed a bit ... until she continued on, "it surpassed ALL understanding!"

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### Monthly Music Videos...

It's December, we featured a couple last month, but here are some more new Christmas songs that you probably haven't heard yet. Enjoy...

- One of may favorite groups, We The Kingdom, has released "Christmas in Hawaii"...
   https://youtu.be/XEpFr0BdiaQ?si=iZRAr0gRz6Cf65Nh
- With a familiar tune and new lyrics Michael Boggs released, "Come You Unfaithful"... https://youtu.be/lfxaRCnJxYl?si=C0hZwgfbpsEnR-vY
- We Are Messengers have a great new song, "Come See"... https://youtu.be/WBO5dse\_mlk?si=KBjoY6P6fsjXLgs0
- A great new song from Jon Reddick is "Someday at Christmas"... https://youtu.be/-g5WWg-ERcA?si=UzGNdY8YCfoQx2k2
- Justin Warren released "This is the Gift of Christmas"...
   https://youtu.be/hrRtoXWVw7U?si=mU-aWjzBgemB76wE
- A great new song from Ryan Stevenson is "One Star"...
   https://youtu.be/YRgHshmtLLM?si=VKV7ytV13 HsPUkb
- Joel Caws released "He Is Born"... https://youtu.be/1DnsF7zq8es?si=fi4UAkwsAZ0nKBBg
- "Home For Christmas" is a great song by Colton Dixon...
   https://youtu.be/TyQCjwmmssg?si=0wewB-53Sm65T3Mz
- Perhaps my favorite new song for the season is by Sanctus Real; "What Christmas Means to Me"... https://youtu.be/1n9p5xCoTXQ?si=4SXsiiYJbthxNVAQ
- "Go Tell It (Gloria)" by Matt Maher and The Choir Room.... https://youtu.be/100IVIrgyiw?si=iDd8oXm3Wwa8VxUD
- Benn Fuller and Jonathan Traylor released "Ring Them Bells"...
   https://youtu.be/RKOVNbKgf9Y?si=2s9hT\_po5lkcD5Pl
- Toby Mac & Tasha Layton have released "Christmas Hits Different... https://youtu.be/Aw3dkj6GoBY?si=bYyZbHtp1rW9 gmx
- Here's a name you haven't heard in a while, artist Steve Camp has released a new song, "Immanuel"...
   https://youtu.be/9vWz3aHU4Po?si=tRC 9R05ilLPtET
- "Christmas Eve" is a new song by Jordan St. Cyr... https://youtu.be/RJFDp7UnC1w?si=ngxk55J-KZP5tX0z
- Mac Powell released "Christmas Time again My Friend"... https://youtu.be/dQh3nVzjOjg?si=KF66Hv6ORN4o36PF

That for a day: Dogs prepare you for babies. Cats prepare



#### The Link...

#### OCTOBER 2023 IMPACT FROM THE LINK

Christmas Joy 2023- We are looking for shoppers!!! If you are interested in blessing a family this Christmas season, there are a few ways to contribute—Please

contact Ashley at 320-354-5465 or <u>email director</u> tor@youarethelink.org by November 30th for more information.

The Food Pantry continues to see an increase in need. In October, The Link welcomed 27 new families and served 137 households distributing a total of 7878 pounds of food.

Wildcat Backpack and Snack Pantry. The Link is currently serving 90 children each week from NL-S schools! This is an ability to supplement children's food for the weekend when they are not in school. The Link is also currently connecting 29 teachers with snacks for students in their classroom.

Client Outreach. Each month, The Link is able to provide support to a number of families facing hardships, such as (but not limited to): job loss, chronic illness, unexpected change in family dynamics and increase in the cost of living. In October, your donations were able to support 14 families by helping with transportation, medical bills and prescription cost, gas, utility bills and rental payments along with providing budgeting support, networking and referrals for additional basic needs.

Tuesday's Table. A free community meal the 1st Tuesday of the month: Our Lady of the Lakes (Spicer), 2nd Tuesday: Evangelical Covenant (New London), 3rd Tuesday: Faith Lutheran (Spicer), 4th Tuesday: Peace Lutheran (New London), 5th Tuesday: Rotating (call 320-354-5555 for more information).

CURRENT NEEDS: Gently used winter gear and kids clothing.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? Pray for the Link and the community--Help us spread awareness by talking about The Link to your friends and family and sharing on social media-- Donate unexpired food items to the food pantry or organize a food drive-- Volunteer at the thrift store or in the food pantry-- Donate your gently used clothing and household goods- (all proceeds kick back into The Link's programs - or Donate financially.

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Remember for every \$1 donated, The Link can purchase \$10 in food through Second Harvest.

Donations made easy Monthly giving at The Link is convenient. You can set up online giving directly through your bank or by visiting The Link's website at <a href="https://www.youarethelink.org">www.youarethelink.org</a> by scanning the QR code. You can also mail your donation to P.O. Box 823, New London, MN 56273, drop off your donation in person or leave your check in the drop box outside of The Link's door at 20 Central Ave E, New London. Questions? Contact Ashley at 320-354-5555.

Thank you for your support! YOU are The Link!

### Simple Ways to Give Your Spiritual Life a Lift...

#### 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.

#### Read 100 (or so) Key Bible Chapters

(Or listen to Pastor read them. He will text or email you a link to each day's recording)

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.

Thot for a day:

### 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 Hielle if you can help.

#### 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 thisjust 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.

#### 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 from December on. Talk to our Trustee, Lonnie Robbin, to sign up or find out more details.



### 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.

December "Make-a-Meal" Day: Wednesday, Dec 13 @ 10:00

We are going to make chicken soup. Would love to have anyone that wants to come!!!

(Meals are in the freezer at church waiting for you to grab and take to someone.)



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closes,

### Prayer...

#### 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 guidance for our Building Committee
- Thanking God that His Word is Truth amidst the lies of the world.
- Protection from the deceitful messages Satan sends your way
- Asking God for faith to stand for His Truth like Daniel's 3 friends!
- Continued wisdom for guidance and decisions (BIG and small)
- Asking God to humble you, seek Him and repent (2 Chronicles 7:14)
- God's protection, wisdom & courage for government leaders
- The ministry of the Jastrams in Japan.

#### A Reminder to Wear Your "Living Word" Sweatshirts





Not only are they warm (and look really "cool") but they could also be a conversation starter when people ask things like, "And where is Living Word located?"

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### Advent...

#### What is Advent?

The church divides the year into different seasons that emphasize the life of Christ and the life of the church. Beginning on Sunday, December 3, 2023, we will enter the season of the church year called Advent. Advent is the season of preparation and anticipation leading up to Christmas, and continuing to Epiphany January 6, 2024.

The focus of Advent is two-fold. On the one hand, we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came into the world as both God and Man so that our sins might be forgiven. On the other hand, we anticipate the day when Jesus will return to Earth and bring an end to this world. Those will be scary days, but we can look forward to the end of the world with hope because through faith in Jesus, the end of this world will mean the beginning of a new life with Christ for eternity.

Advent, then, is a time for us to repent and believe. Knowing that Jesus was born to forgive our sins, we repent (admit our failures to God) and believe that we are forgiven because of the death and resurrection of Jesus on our behalf. Also, knowing that Jesus is coming back, we repent and believe that when He returns, He will give us eternal life.

#### Advent Devotions What Child Is This?

On December 3, the season of Advent begins. If reading LHM's regular Daily Devotions isn't a part of your normal routine, then our seasonal devotions are a great place to begin. They're insightful, easy to read, and thought-provoking—each one consumable in far less time than it takes to drink a cup of coffee. Advent Devotions run from Sunday, December 3, 2023, through Saturday, January 6, 2024.

This year Dr. Kari Vo has written What Child Is This? in English, and

five different authors have written El profundo amor del Padre ("The Deep Love of the Father") for Spanish readers. Each devotion takes readers through the wonder of God's grace in sending His Son, born in the



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flesh, to live, die—and rise again—for a world the Father so dearly

Beginning Dec. 3, you can receive Advent Devotions as a daily email. They are also available now to be downloaded and printed to give to others, too. They're perfect for personal study, small group Bible study use, or to be read or listened to in larger church contexts. Three reflection questions prompt users to think about and discuss the day's message. For English, go to <a href="https://linkowskipscom/adviento">https://linkowskipscom/adviento</a>.

As you read and reflect on Christ's birth in this year's Advent Devotions, you can set your calendar ahead for Lent 2024. Dr. Kari Vo's Lamb of God in English will consider the Savior's passion, crucifixion, and Easter morning resurrection. Plan now to enjoy these rich texts with your family and friends and be sure to consider sharing them with those you know who could use the Good News of the Gospel in their lives.

### Communion Notes...



The Lord's Supper will be celebrated on the normal First and Third Sundays, **December 3rd**, as well as Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, **December 24th** @ 5:00 p.m.

#### 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 gluten-sensitive conditions. You will find these wafers in a separate cup in the communion tray.

### Story Behind The Song...

"What Child Is This?" is a famous and traditional Christmas carol crafted in 1865. The lyrics were composed by William Chatterton Dix, the son of a surgeon residing in Bristol, England. William spent most of his life as a businessman in Glasgow, Scotland, working at the managerial level of the Maritime Insurance Company.

In 1865, William was 29 years old when he suffered from a near-fatal bout of sickness. He was afflicted with severe depression, and this neardeath experience changed him completely. While undergoing recovery, he experienced a spiritual awakening that inspired him to start crafting hymns. He became an avid reader of the Bible, subsequently wrote the lyrics of "What Child Is This?," and incorporated the tune of the celebrated English folk song, "Greensleeves."

Greensleeves was already one of the most aesthetic and beloved melodies of the festive season at that time. Although it's not a quintessential Christmas tune, its association with the festive season can be dated back to 1642. It was paired back then with Waits' carol titled, "The Old Year Now Away is Fled." Also, William Shakespeare refers to this popular tune twice in his famous play - "Merry Wives of Windsor."

The lyricsurges humanity to accept Christ. The eloquent melody is haunting, and its beautiful essence reiterates the "Adoration of the Shepherds" who paid a visit to Jesus during the nativity. The lyrics pose questions that reflect what the shepherds might be pondering about during the encounter and subsequently offers a response to such questions.

The first stanza is heavily influenced by his contemporary romantic poets and flirts ceremoniously along the edges of emotionalism. The carol starts with a rhetorical question, condensing the concept of childbirth within a single paragraph. The poet has successfully painted a classic picture of the nativity - the child Christ sleeping on mother Mary's lap, as the angels and shepherds provide the background score with "Anthems Sweet" and "Watch and Keep" respectively.

"What Child Is This?" was first published in 1871, six years after its origin. It was featured in an influential and prestigious collection of carols in the United Kingdom, titled "Christmas Carols Old and New." The hymnal was edited by John Stainer and Henry Ramsden Bramley. Stainer was primarily responsible for harmonizing the musical setting. In recent times, the carol has gained quite some popularity in the USA, in spite of its roots being in Great Britain.

What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?

#### Chorus

This, this is Christ, the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing: Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate, Where ox and ass are feeding?

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Good Christian, fear: for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.

#### [Chorus]

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, Come, peasant, king to own Him. The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

[Chorus]

#### Note from the editor:

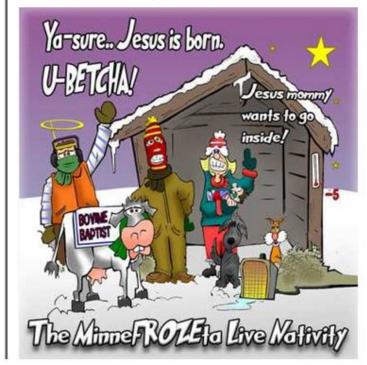
Many artists have recorded this hymn. Here is a performance by my favorite family bluegrass group, the Petersens...

https://youtu.be/xRfPUrsneig?si=OE29LZTPUJsfhwcg

Another great version is by the One Voice Children's Choir...

https://youtu.be/sNYpxYKtC\_w?si=EYtWc4XMzkEfYfgU

### The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



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