



December 2024 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

Ouestions for Pastor...

Why Doesn.t God Just Come Down And Prove Himself to Us?

This year in our confirmation classes we are focusing on "apologetics." It's actually just the opposite of what it sounds like. Apologetics is NOT apologizing for what you believe, but rather giving a defense for the truth of what you believe.



In order to defend what we believe about God, we need to be ready for some common questions that will challenge us. The question above is one the students came up with when I asked for their questions about God. (You can't begin to answer other people's questions until you answer some that you have yourself.)

It's a great question! And of all the questions they have had, this one was probably the simplest one to answer: "He did!"

After I gave that answer I started to "see" the light bulbs come on in their minds and the knowing smiles light up their faces. They figured out that I was referring to Jesus.

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being...

Hebrews 1:1-3

God coming to Earth to reveal Himself to us is what Christmas is all about. (And, of course, it was Jesus' resurrection that proved He really is the God He claimed to be.)

As you prepare to celebrate the historical event we call "Christmas." remember this: You don't have to try to guess at who God is or what He is like or what He likes. All you have to do is look at Jesus. He came down, not just to de for our sin, but to reveal God to us!

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recordings are sent daily via text message or email. If you'd like to sign up to receive them in your inbox, just let me know and I'll get you added.

> Thanks for asking Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

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...

The passages relating to Jesus' birth (Or listen to Pastor read them. He can text or email you a link to each day's recording)

You'll find the readings listed on our Daily Readings page



From Pastor Appreciation Sunday.

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 15 @ 10:00 a.m.
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship -December 24 @ 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve...

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

(Tuesday, 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!

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Page 5 | Mark Your Calendars...

Mission & Ministry Team

Thursday, December 12th @ 6:30 p.m. Elders' Team @ 5:30 prior to MMT

Building Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 3rd @ 5:30 p.m. (Prior to Men's Study)

Upcoming Fellowship Outings...

Celebrate Birthdays

We will celebrate December & January birthdays in January. (Date / Place to be determined)

Women's Retreat...

November 14-16 2025 At Green Lake Bible Camp More details to come



Lefsa Making...



The folks who helped us make lefsa last year have offered to help again this year if anyone is interested.

No dates yet. I'm just looking for interest at this point. Please sign up at church if you'd like to make lefsa some time in December or January.

Advent...

Sun, Nov 30, 2025 - Wed, Dec 24, 2025

Read, listen or subscribe to Advent Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries at: https://www.lhm.org/advent/default.asp



That for a day: Stop!

"Thanks"giving...



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





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Outreach News...



Chili Cook Off

Saturday, January 18, 2025, 4:00-6:00 ish (exact time TBD)

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

Let us know if you have anyone who could be a "judge."

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

Prayer Ministry to start up in the New Year

Looking for a few people who have a passion for praying!!! The plan is to meet a

few minutes after church to pray with and for each other.

Talk to Tammy Miller if interested



Community Festival / Block Party Spring, 2025 -

Talk to Tammy Miller if interested in being on planning Committee or if you have ideas!!!



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

LWMLMeeting & Women's Study:

Our next meeting and Bible study will be Wednesday, December 11th @ 10:00 a.m. All ladies of the church are welcome!



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 CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS:

Please join us on Saturday, November 30, 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.

November Supper Outing...

Opportunities for Growth...



Sunday Morning Bible Study
Every Sunday @ 9:00
Join us for coffee and God's Word

Monthly Morning Women's Study:

December 11th @ 10:00 All women are welcome!





Men's Study

Meets Tuesdays @ 6:30 (Come at 6:15 for food) No study December 24th or 31st

NEW!!!...

Monthly Women's Christian Book Club

Starts Tuesday, December 9 10:00-noon

Violet Dauk will host the first meeting at her home.

At the first meeting we'll make plans for our future gatherings, have coffee and talk about possible Christian novels to read.

If you have any questions, please check with Violet.

Confirmation News

December 4 and 11: Confirmation Service Project

- 5:30 Pizza
- 6:00 Students in the Christmas Program have practice
 - All other students will have a Christmas project.

December 18: Class (as usual) @ 6:00

(Pastor will have pizza @5:45 for those who need)

December 25 & January 1: No Class

Remember to check the "PowerPoint Clicker" & Communion Wafer schedules.

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Sunday School News..



Children's Christmas program: Sunday, December 15, at 10:00

"His Name is Jesus"

Program practice: Sunday mornings @ 9:00.

We will practice on Wednesday, December 4 & 11.

Pizza at 5:30 and practice begins at 6:00!

No Sunday School December 29. Class will resume on January 5, 2025.



Donations sent to Orphan Grain Train. We sent 14 School Kits and 1 Teacher Kit



Operation Christmas Child...

Operation Christmas Child Wrap-Up:

22 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 22 boxes!"

Mona Hjelle







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!



Youth Events...



Planning has begun for attending...

As of now we have 8 youth planning to attend.

Gathering Date: July 19-23, 2025

Youth, 14-19 years of age by the Gathering Date

- Gathering Registrations were sent on November 1st!
- Current Fundraiser: "Grab an Envelope"





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
- His Mercy
- Thanksgiving Gatherings

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

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New Member Biographies...



Suzanne Helland, Gene Gravley, Jim Larsen, Torasie Larsen, Loretta Schlick, Dave Rose, Darlene Rose

Gene Gravley

Family:

I have three step-daughters: Jackie Probst of Worthington, MN, Jeanne Hermann of Hudson, WI, and Jill Pulsifer of Belgrade

Where you were born and grew up - and school (s) graduated from: I was born in Tyler, Minnesota, I lived in Ruthton for four years, then we moved to New London, and I have been here since!

Where you live now:

Llive in New London

Job or career (or what it used to be if you are retired):

I am retired from BNSF. I worked as a Conductor on the railroad for 44 years.

Hobbies or things you like to do for fun:

I used to do woodworking and also golfed.

A favorite Bible passage or story - and what makes it a favorite:

My favorite passage is John 3:16. It gives us eternal life!

What God used to attract you to Living Word:

Friendly people and a small congregation.

A 'fun fact' - something about you that most people don't know:

I used to enjoy lawn work, and I farmed for seven years (along with railroading) when my folks retired.

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Suzanne Helland

Family:

I married Tyrone Helland in 1966 and had two daughters Kimberly and Teresa. Kimberly passed away in 2020 and Tyrone passed in 2023. We were married for 57 years, 35 years lived in Arizona. I moved to Minnesota after my husband passed in 2023.

Where you were born and grew up - and school(s) graduated from.

Grew up as Sue Gravley, born in Belgrade, and there were 4 brothers (3 brothers older) and one sister. My mother and father were James and Dora Gravley. My folks had a farm 5 miles west of New London. I graduated from New London - Spicer school.

Where you live now.

At present, I'm renting a one bedroom apartment at Glen Oaks Village Apartments.

Job or career (or what it used to be if retired)

I'm retired, but previously I worked 12 years for Banner Health in Arizona as office coordinator supporting the Nursing Director, doctors, etc. Enjoyed those 12 years immensely, (she was an excellent leader and a Christian).

Hobbies or things you like to do for fun.

I'm limited on what I can do, since arthritis keeps me from doing things, but I do enjoy making crafts, sewing, working on quits, etc.

A favorite Bible passage or story - and why it's your favorite.

John 3:16 is a Bible verse from the New Testament's Gospel of John that reads, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". No one needs to be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. This was the last thing I said to my brother Larry, moments before he died and in a whisper that is the nicest thing to hear.

What God used to attract you to Living Word.

THE LCMS believes that justification comes from God "by divine grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone. It teaches that Jesus is the focus of the entire Bible and that faith in him alone is the way to eternal salvation. After attending Living Word I was very impressed with Pastor Dauk, as a leader for God and Bible-based sermons. With this, I mentioned to my brother, Gene, and he started coming. It's a very comforting, friendly congregation.

A 'fun fact' - something about you that most people don't know. While my father was a patient at Glen Oaks in the early 1990's, I

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dressed up as a clown and went to visit him on Halloween night, he loved it and the next day he told my mother a clown came to visit, she replied to him will don't you know who that clown it was? That was your daughter Sue, but he wouldn't believe her. I guess I did an excellent job.

Jim & Torasie Larsen

Family:

We have been married for thirteen years, and have a dog named Leonard.

Kids (and grandkids):

Tim and Lisa Towner (Kayla-22, James-21, Jacob-15)

Anthony Larsen

Nick and Megan Fratzke (Tailor-22, Paxton-10, Lennix-9, Percy-7)

Nate and Alyssa Larsen (Lila-5, Luca-3)

Where you were born and grew up - and school (s) graduated from:

Torasiewas born in International Falls and grew up in Orr, Minnesota. Jim was born in Heron Lake, Minnesota, and grew up on a farm there.

Where you live now:

Our address is New London.

Job or career (or what it used to be if you are retired):

Torasie started working in the family restaurant at age ten. She has worked in a grocery store, as a home-health aid, and as a massage therapist. Torasie is currently a part-time merchandiser for American Greetings.

Jim is a retired railroad conductor.

Hobbies or things you like to do for fun:

Torasie likes spending time with their grandkids. She also enjoys photography, reading, crocheting, being in nature, RV camping and Ebiking.

Jim likes lawn and garden activities.

A favorite Bible passage or story - and what makes it a favorite:

Torasie: "Be strong and courageous for the Lord is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9. It reminds me that God is always present in my life

Jim: The Parable of the Prodigal Son. It shows that God loves us no matter what.

What God used to attract you to Living Word:

Torasie: Baseball. Becoming friends with Marcia and Kevin Welsh. Jim: Friends.

That for a day: Youth

A 'fun fact' - something about you that most people don't know:

Torasie: I have fostered hundreds of kittens over the eight years that we've fostered dogs and cats from the Shelter. We've had only one "foster fail." He's still with us - Leonard is 6 ½ years old! Jim: I went to college and played football, and was an actor in a college play called, "The American Dream."

Dave and Darlene Rose

Family:

Our given names: David Jon Rose and Darlene Marie Nack-Rose

Where you were born and grew up - and school (s) graduated from:

Dave-Warroad Dar- Alexandria

Where you live now:

New London

Job or career (or what it used to be if you are retired):

We owned Honda Kawasaki of Willmar for 20+ years. Dave did many other things after that, including: Building supply, Manager for Shakopee RV park, etc.

Hobbies or things you like to do for fun:

Dave likes Hockey for fun.

Dar likes illustration art, sewing and playing with grandkids.

A favorite Bible passage or story - and what makes it a favorite:

My (Dar) confirmation passage... "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish by have eternal life."

What God used to attract you to Living Word:

It's Missouri Synod, same as when I (Dar) grew up - and the pastor and people!!

A 'fun fact' - something about you that most people don't know:

Dave guarded Lieutenant Kelly in the service.

Dar's grandpa was a Missouri Synod pastor.

Loretta Schlick

Family:

I'm married to John Schlick (for 35 years now) and have two daughters, Janet Cleveland (husband Richard) and Kathryn McLaren who is widowed. I also have three grandchildren: Karenda, Chase and Jae (Kathryn's kids).

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Where you were born and grew up - and school (s) graduated from:

I was born in Yakima, Washington, and lived in Washington until I was ten years old. We then moved to Spicer to be near my grandparents.

Where you live now:

John and Llive in Willmar- six miles north of town.

Job or career (or what it used to be if you are retired):

I'm a retire LPN. In later years I worked at a group home.

Hobbies or things you like to do for fun:

I love to read and watch TV. Hike to go out to eat as well as watch the birds.

A favorite Bible passage or story - and what makes it a favorite:

My mom used to read Bible stories to us when we were little. I liked all of them. My favorite hymn is "In the Garden."

What God used to attract you to Living Word:

A friend told me about worship on the beach at Spicer years ago. Also, I went to a friend's funeral years ago and like Pastor David's service.

A 'fun fact' - something about you that most people don't know:

I can't think of much. We live at the edge of an old-growth forest, so we see lots of squirrels, chipmunks, pileated woodpeckers and deer.



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A Minute for Couples...

(from the Prepare-Enrich blog)

We've rounded up four types of traditions to start this Christmas.

1. The Giving Back Tradition

Donating your time, volunteering, pitching in – whatever you want to call it – is not only great at an individual level, it's also a meaningful experience you can share with



your spouse or family. Beyond the obvious benefit of doing something good for others, it also strengthens your bond, reinforces your shared values, and helps you recenter on the things that truly matter. Plus it's an invaluable, hands-on way to model generosity for your children if you have them. So whether you volunteer at church holiday events, have the kids choose gifts to donate to those in need, or organize a neighborhood food drive, making it an annual or seasonal occurrence is a great way to incorporate generosity into your lives while also helping you feel dose and connected.

2. The "Just for Us" Tradition

This time of year usually brings more social opportunities and commitments than usual. Work holiday parties, neighborhood gatherings, school events, family get-togethers, celebrations with various groups of friends, the list goes on. It's not unusual to feel like your marriage gets pushed to the back burner, but that doesn't mean it should. Consider how you might start a new holiday tradition that's just for you as a couple – or how you can incorporate your existing relationship rituals into your celebrations. Maybe you set aside one day each year for a date and holiday shopping, decide to swap material gifts for a special experience, or incorporate gratitude into your daily devotions. Whatever this looks like for you, a "just for us" tradition is a great way to to make sure your connection stays strong during such a hectic time.

3. The "Presence over Presents" Tradition

For some families, gifts are a significant part of holiday celebrations. For others, they play a smaller role. There's no right or wrong way to incorporate gifts — every family is different. No matter where yours falls, one thing that most can benefit from is a tradition that's all about quality time, hanging out, and connecting. Maybe it's packing up the car with hot cocoa and snacks for a drive to look at holiday lights, or a family game night after everyone shares what they're most thankful for. Perhaps every year on a certain date you start a gigantic jigsaw puzzle that you work on a bit each evening. There are so many options here — the goals is simply being fully present with each other and en-

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The next time you feel like complaining, remember: eats better than 30% of the people in this world.

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joying each other's company.

4. The Tradition with a Twist

For many people, holiday traditions are a big part of what make the season so special, as they have a unique way of melding the past and present. While we might long for them to stay the same, the reality is that traditions often evolve over time - and that's okay. Sometimes they change out of necessity, like if the family has grown so large that your aunt and uncle can no longer host in their small house. Other times, you can be intentional about tweaking traditions just a bit to make them a better fit for your life stage, circumstances, or preferences. Maybe after years of serving the same menu you discover no one in your family actually even likes sweet potatoes, so you swap them for your famous homemade mac and cheese. Or instead of a traditional gift exchange with your extended family, you do a white elephant exchange because it's more budget-friendly and frankly, more fun. You don't have to completely start from scratch when you want to switch things up. Instead, just get creative with ways you put a modern twist on the tried and true.

Whether you've been thinking about the Christmas holiday for months already or you insist on waiting until after Thanksgiving (at least!), it's undeniable that traditions are a big part of the season. By doing a bit of planning ahead, you can be more intentional about what types of traditions you carry out this year and for years to come.

Now Through December 1st...

Your chance to order Living Word apparel (hats, sweatshirts and t-shirts).



Go to Rambow.com enter Store Code: LWLC





Choir News...

...Will Sing During the Sunday School Christmas Program

Please practice with us after Sunday worship this month



The Legend of the Poinsettia...

Aside from the Christmas tree itself, no plant symbolizes Christmas quite like the poinsettia. More than 2 million will be sold this year, making it the largest potted flower crop grown in the United States!

In their native region of southern Mexico, poinsettias flower during the winter season. They are perennial shrubs that were once considered weeds and will grow 10 to 15 feet tall in the wild. The colored "flowers" are specialized leaves called bracts, while the actual flowers are inconspicuous beads found in the center of the bracts.

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.

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 mirade. From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night'.

The reason blazing red (and now pink, white, orange, plus combinations of these colors) poinsettias are the Christmas flower in the United States is an accidental discovery by Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779–1851), an American statesman and the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico in 1828.

Poinsett saw the red flowers and was so impressed by the beauty of these plants that he sent cuttings back to his plantation near Georgetown, South Carolina. The plant was shared with botanical gardens and growers across the country. Soon, the plants became popular across the U.S. and were renamed for Poinsett.

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Email Humor...

Safety Tips for Winter Driving:

- 1. Install Winter tires
- 2. Drive south
- Continue until you see palm trees
- 4. Apply brakes and sunscreen

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Seen on a birthday card:

Outside:

Forget about the past. You can't change it.
Forget about the future. You can't predict it.

Forget about the present. I didn't buy you one.

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Who is smarter, you or your dog?

A Canadian psychologist is selling a video that teaches you how to test your dog's IQ.

Here's how it works... If you spend \$12.99 for the video, your dog is the smarter one



Communion Notes...

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated in December on the normal First Sunday: (1st) as well as at the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (5:00 p.m. December 24).



Reminders:

- Wine is in the two outer rings of the individual-cup tray
 Grape Juice is in the inner ring of the individual-cup tray
- 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.

December 2024 - Living Word Lutheran - Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDIES 10:00 - WORSHIP w/Communion 11:15 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP 11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE	2	3 6:00 - BUILDING TEAM 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	4 6:00 - CHRISTMAS PGM. PRACTICE (Pizza @ 5:30) 7:00 - YOUTH GROUP	• Sund	6 upper Dates lay, Decemb tmas Eve, D	er 1st
9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP 11:30 - CHOIR PRACTICE	9	10 10:00- NEW WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	10:00 - LWM & WOMEN'S STUDY 6:00 - CHRISTMAS PGM. PRACTICE 7:00 - YOUTH GROUP	12 Mission Ministry 5:30 - ELDERS' TEAM 6:30 - MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM	13	14
15 CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - SS CHRISTMAS PGM. 11:15 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	16	6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	18 6:00 -CONFIRMATION 7:00 - YOUTH GROUP	6:00 - YOUTH TEAM MEETING	20	21
9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 - CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP w/communion	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Merry Christma	26	3	***
9:00 - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	30	7:00 - YOUTH LOCK-IN	Jan 1 NEW YEAR	Jan 2	Jan 3	Jan 4

December 2024 - Daily Readings

This Month we finish readings from the Hymnal of the Old Testament (The Psalms), then we begin readings that focus on the coming & birth of Jesus the Messiah.

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

To receive these audio recordings daily, just emailhim: pastor@livingwordlutheran.net.

NOTE: Email or text Pastor with questions you have on something you read.

ec	Use today to Worship - and catch up on readings you missed!\
2	Psalm 117
3	Psalm 121
4	Psalm145
5	Psalm 146
6	Psalm 150
9	WEEK OF DEC 8: PROPHECIES OF THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH Genesis 12:1-3
10	Deuteronomy 18:14-22
11	Isaiah 42:1-9
12	
12	Isaiah 61:1-3

	Luke 1:26-38
Dec 18	Luke 1:39-45
Dec 19	Luke 1:46-56
Dec 20	Luke 1:57-80
Dec	22 Use today to Worship and catch up on readings you missed
Dec 23	John 1:1-14
Dec 24	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 25	Matthew 1:18-25
Dec 26	Revelation 12:1-5
Dec 27	Luke 2:21-38
	WEEK OF DEC 29: Jesus tells why He came to Earth
Dec 30	John 18:33-40
Dec 31	Luke 4:42-44
Jan 1	Matthew 20:28 & Luke 19:9-10
	
Jan 2	John 3:16-18

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 1 Wendy & Lonny Robbin Dec 8 Jason & Levi Miller

Dec 15 Pam Johnson & Linda VanMeter

Dec 22 Larry Levin & Jim Stinson

Christmas Eve Open Dec 29 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. Thanks!

Elders

Dec 1, 8, 15 Steve Wulf & Duane Hansen Dec 22, Candlelight, 29 Kevin Welsh & Dan Miller

Custodian

December Available January Available

Children's Church

Dec 1 Alison Sarsland Dec 8 Violet Dauk

Dec 15 No Children's Church - Christmas Program

Dec 22 Levi Miller Dec 29 Violet Dauk

Power Point Clicker

 Dec 1
 Carter

 Dec 8
 Parker

 Dec 15
 Open

 Dec 22
 Troy

 Christmas Eve
 Open

 Dec 29
 Open



Communion Bread Maker

Dec 1 Ella Dec 24 Parker

Page 24

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I know. I know. People say, people think a bit bigger?!

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Page 25 Altar Guild December

Mona Hjelle

Accompanying Musicians

 Dec 1
 Sharon Willen

 Dec 8
 Scott Wachter

 Dec 15
 Sharon Willen

 Dec 22
 Scott Wachter

Candlelight Scott Wachter & Sharon Willen

Dec 29 Open

"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

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.

Seen on Church Signboards...

Mary Wrapped the First (and Still the Best) Christmas Present!

December Discipleship Verse...

"But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:10-11

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 3 "St. Paul sets an example of God's daily purpose for us."

Nov 10 "The Election's over. What now?"

Nov 17 "Songs and Hymns: Mini-sermons every Sunday."

Nov 24 "What's the purpose of 'Church'? The short answer is..."

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 muchneeded 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.

Donation Reminder

While we love donations of items for the church, we have very limited storage. If you have an item you think we need, there is a procedure: Please contact Tammy Miller 320-905-2434 before you donate! Thank you!!



Page 26 Page 27

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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 (Dec. 15)
- . 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 all 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 and the Int'l Lutheran Council

Thank You...

to Scott and Sharon for so faithfully accompanying us!

If you have someone you'd like to thank, please email webmaster@livingwordlutheran.net

Thot for a day: I

Building Committee Update...

Check out the new computerized drawings on the table by the entry door at church.



The Committee is in the process of getting a preliminary blueprint drawn up as well as a preliminary "ballpark" estimate of cost.

Some pertinent figures (as of October 31st):

Remaining Balance of Mortgage on current building: \$ 9100

Balance in CDs dedicated to New Sanctuary: \$63,100

OUR NEXT BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING:

Tuesday, December 3rd @ 5:30 (Prior to Men's Study)

Welcome...

Congratulations!

To Our New Members! We Welcome You to Living Word!

Gene Gravley Suzanne Helland Jim and Torasie Larsen Loretta Schlick Dave and Darlene Rose



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Living Word's 2025 Goals:...

- Continue the Make A Meal program. (It is very successful!)
- · Continue the monthly Fellowship outings: Birthdays and Supper
- Continue the Birthday Card/Anniversary ministry
- · Challenge every member to bring a guest this year
- Create a Visitors Table (Coffee, giveaways along with church and prayer ministry info)
- Initiate the "Prayer D-Fence" Program (Adults "adopting "a kid to pray for, send cards etc...)
- Start a Prayer Ministry with people praying for/with others after the Sunday Service
- A Concert!! (Summer...outdoor)
- Chili Cook-Off (Will be January 18)
- Host a Block Party or Community Festival in the Spring
- Focus on the National Youth Gathering event for youth
- Coordinating with Redeemer, Willmar and St. John, Atwater to host joint youth events
- Continue weekly Youth Gatherings
- Keep the church yard looking nice and continue to de-clutter the storage areas inside.

A church that prays AND plays together stays together!

FALL VOTERS' ASSEMBLY:

Approved the above goals and the MMT's proposed budget for 2025



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

Read the current newsletter at:

https://engage.lcms.org/japan-fall-2024/



Opportunities to Serve...

Help With Children's Church

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.

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



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.

Custodian Volunteers Needed.

For DECEMBER and any month in 2025...

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

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



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Make-A-Meal Program...

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

Please grab some meals from the freezer at church and take them to someone who's going through a tough time.



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Church Directory...

We are starting to compile information and photos for the CHURCH DIRECTORY!

If everyone supplies a photo and the following information you will make this task so much simpler.

If you do not have a photo of your family/yourself, Torasie will take your photo for you after church. (She will have her camera available to do that after each service in July.)

Relaw is the info we would like to include:

Name (Names).
Please i	ndude Dates of irth and Anniversary date as applicable
Address	\$
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	ation is voluntary, we will not sell your information but will
use it st	trictly as a way to communicate)
If you w	vant to email this information along with a photo, you can
	cabbage_12@hotmail.com



One of our goals in 2025 is to continue to spread awareness of The Link and it's programs!

If you would like a member of The Link's staff to speak at your church, business, small group or other local establishment, we would love to share how our programs help local families in need!!!

YOU are The Link!







CAN YOU HELP?

CURRENT IMMEDIATE NEEDS

- Shoppers or monetary donations to help local families in need this Christmas
- Monetary donations to help support The Food Pantry, Client Outreach, The Wildcat Backpack and The Snack Pantry Programs
- Gently used kids and adult sized clothing and shoes for Foster Stitches and our Household Exchange Program
- · Monetary donations to help with building repairs
- Donations of unexpired food items to help keep our shelves stocked for families in need
- Volunteers willing to help on an "on-call" basis to help move furniture for The Household Exchange Program
- Volunteers willing to work at Community Revival Boutique and Thrift on Fridays or Saturdays

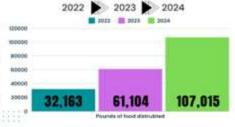
If you are able to help with any of the above or need more information, please contact
Ashley at 320-354-5465 or email director@youarethelink.org

THE FOOD PANTRY HOUSEHOLDS SERVED COMPARISON





POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON JANUARY - OCTOBER



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Page 33 | The Link...



OCTOBER 2024 IMPACT FROM THE LINK

THE FOOD PANTRY



In October, The Food Pantry reached a record of **211 households** servedincluding 365 adults, 215 children and 53 seniorsdistributing a total of 13,554 pounds of food!

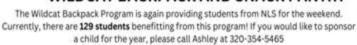
CLIENT OUTREACH and HOUSEHOLD EXCHANGE



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.

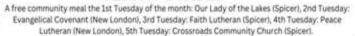
In October, your donations were able to support 131 families by helping with medical bills and prescription cost, utility bills and rental payments along with providing budgeting support, networking and referrals for additional basic household needs including clothing, winter gear, dishes and furniture!

WILDCAT BACKPACK AND SNACK PANTRY



The Snack Pantry is currently providing snacks for over 30 teachers at NLS to distribute to their students throughout the school day.

TUESDAY'S TABLE



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; Donate financially-

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

CURRENT NEEDS:

Gently used clothing & winter gear and household essentials.

Food: Kid friendly food (corn dogs, chicken nuggets, french fries, pizza, snacks, etc., Monetary donations.



Donations made easy

Monthly giving at the the Link is convenient. You can set up online giving directly through your bank or by visiting The Link's website at www.youarethelink.org 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!

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Email Inspiration...

A MODERN CHRISTMAS PARABLE

There once was a king who loved a humble maiden. This king was of uncommon royal lineage. He was a king above kings, with power and might to make all others humble before him. Statesmen trembled at his pronouncements. None dared

breathe a word against him, for he had the strength to crush all who opposed him. The wealth of his holdings was unfathomable. Tribute arrived on a daily basis from lesser kings who hoped to gain his favor.



And yet this mighty king was melted by love for a humble maiden who lived in the poorest village in his vast kingdom. He longed to go to this maiden and announce his love for her, but here arose the king's dilemma: how to declare his love? Certainly, he could appear before her resplendent in his royal robes and surrounded with the Royal Guard. ready to carry her away in a carriage inlaid with gold and precious stones. He could bring her to the palace and crown her head with jewels and clothe her in the finest silks. She would surely not resist this type of proposal, for no one dared to resist the king.

But would she love him?

She might say she loved him. She might be awed by his royal splendor and tremble at the thought of being blessed with such an amazing opportunity. She might tell herself that she would be foolish to reject such a marriage proposal. But would she love him, or would she go through the motions all the while living a life of empty duty, nursing a private grief for the life she had left behind? Would she love him or regret the moment of being face to face with the overwhelming grandeur of the king?

Or would she be happy at his side, loving him for himself and not for his title or riches or power?

He did not want a wife who behaved as a subject to his royal decrees, cringing at his word and unwilling to do anything but agree with all he said and did. Instead, he wanted an equal, a queen whose love knew no restrictions or limitations. He wanted an equal whose voice would speak to him at all times without hesitation. Love with his beloved maiden must mean equality with her. He wanted a relationship with the woman that had neither barriers nor walls in which he was not a

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king and she was not a poor subject of the crown. The love shared between them would cross the chasm that threatened to keep them apart, bringing the king and peasant together and making the unequal equal. In short, he wanted the maiden to love him for himself and not for any other reason.

He had to find a way to win the maiden's love without overwhelming her and without destroying her free will to choose. The king realized that to win the maiden's love, he had only one choice. He had to become like her, without power or riches and without the title of king. Only then would she be able to see him simply for who he was and not for what his position made him. He had to become her equal, and to do this he must leave all that he had.

And so one night, after all within the castle were asleep, he laid aside his golden crown and removed his rings of state. He took off his royal robes of silk and linen and redressed himself in the common clothes of the poorest of the kingdom. Leaving by way of the servant's entrance, the king left his crown, his castle, and his kingdom behind. As the next day's sun rose in the east, the maiden emerged from her humble cottage to find herself face to face with a stranger, a common man with kindly eyes who requested an opportunity to speak with her and, in time, to court her for her hand in marriage.

And the courtship goes on...

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Andrew S

ETERNAL LIFE, MY FAVORITE ... THANKS JESUS !

Monthly Music Videos...

Thanksgiving is just barely over, but its time for some Christmas music... both new songs and new releases of old favorites...

- A re-release from Cochren & Co is "Hope Is Here To Stay"... https://voutu.be/wJ88E1Q-hPo
- A great new song by Phil Wickham is "Worth The Wait"... https://voutu.be/fqEitrRE6D4
- I love this version of "O Holy Night" from Stephen McWhirter... https://youtu.be/EWPr3-niNSY
- "This Christmas" is a from new release from Becca Bowen... https://voutu.be/ewRleSu1v4c
- "We Sing (Joy To The World) is from Seph Schlueter and Leanna Crawford... https://voutu.be/YG_vvJAWTeA
- 2023 New Artist of the Year, Forrest Frank's new song is "The Present"... https://youtu.be/zdRzY1rbc7Y
- Blessing Offor released another great song, "Snow Globe"... https://youtu.be/vdBwZjU5f_w
- "Come Adore Him" is a great new song from Riley Clemmons... https://voutu.be/F-zepQVQSdA
- Sam Bowman & GLADDEN released "Misfit Toys"... https://youtu.be/5JBj Hoah80
- Tasha Layton has a new song, "Wake Up It's Christmas"... https://youtu.be/ggosHu9agnc
- "I'll Still Have Christmas Day" is from new artist, Coqui... https://voutu.be/PRu57bdgYmo
- Justin Gambino brings new version of "Joy To The World"... https://voutu.be/sp U2VLMCnQ
- "When We Behold" is the latest from Matt Redmon... https://voutu.be/vBMIDDW061U
- A beautiful version of "Silent Night" was released by Dan & Shay... https://youtu.be/XbAnlpgrNIA
- One of my favorite groups, Home Free released "Greatest Gifts of All"... https://youtu.be/T3wAGDozsjY
- "He Who Is To Come" was just released by Kristian Stanfill and Brooke Ligertwood... https://youtu.be/TozxwOEmZA8

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Experience is the

Page 37 Story Behind The Song...

The Christmas carol, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, is one of the very few that doesn't actually mention the birth of the Savior. The life of the author will help us see why the message of the angels is more the focus of this beloved carol. Even so, this hymn is a Christmas favorite among many orthodox Christians. The "angels bending near the earth / To touch their harps of gold", coming through the cloven skies "with peaceful wings unfurled", bending on hovering wing to sing of the Messiah's birth; it is all wonderful imagery, and Christmas wouldn't be the same without it.

It might come as a surprise, then, to know that the author of It came upon the midnight dear, the US pastor and writer Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810-1876), was a minister in a Church which does not subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity, and that the hymn has been condemned as not really a hymn at all. Hymn scholar Erik Routley wrote that "in its original form, the hymn is little more than an ethical song, extolling the worth and splendor of peace among men".

It is true that the hymn does not in fact mention God or the Lord Jesus Christ, and that Sears was a Unitarian minister, but there is more to him than meets the eye.

Edmund Sears, a pastor in Wayland, Massachusetts, wrote the poem in 1849 after suffering a breakdown. He wrote only two hymns in his life, and "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" was one of them. He wrote this carol during the times of social upheaval as a result of the industrial revolution in New England, and also the frantic Gold Rush to California. Sears was experiencing a time of sadness with the revolution in Europe and the war with Mexico in the U.S., he saw everything around him as full of "sin and strife". The hymn below was printed in the Christian Register, a Boston paper published on December 29, 1849. The third stanza, which we rarely see, shows how worried Edmund Sears was about the world situation.

"But with the woes of sin and strife The world has suffered long: Beneath the angel-strain have rolled Two thousand years of wrong: And man, at war with man, hears not The love-song, which they bring: O hush the noise, ve men of strife. And hear the angels sing!"

This season of Christmas, full of hope, reminds us all of the Savior that was born so long ago. He didn't stay in the manger, but gave His very

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life for YOU and me and one day soon we will reign with Him and the "whole world give back the song which now the angels sing".

There was much to be hopeful for then, the angels were bringing a message of good cheer! Be prayerful and ask God to put someone in your path to share this Good News: There is much to be hopeful for NOW...Jesus Christ is about to return for His Bride, the Church. For Io, the days are hastening on!

It is right that we should joyfully sing "Hark! the herald angels sing" and "Joy to the world" each Christmas season. But always there are moments when we realize the message of peace has not yet been fully realized on earth. Then we sing "It came upon the midnight clear," and the power of the Incarnation and the message of the gospel touch us even more deeply.

Nearly 200 years later, this carol is still bringing peace and comfort to those who feel stressed and flustered in their lives, particularly at Christmas time.

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King." The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.

O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,

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by prophet seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

Brand new from Hannah Kerr and Austin French...

https://youtu.be/GuvEga5BgEo

Here is a mashup version of this hymn by Anthem Lights at...

https://youtu.be/8T3pMVToorY

A great version by MercyMe at...

https://youtu.be/xpyQUTs4pWE

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Christmas Season Is Coming!