


Living Word
Lutheran Church
LCMS

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

ROMANS 12:2

March 2025 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
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Website: www.livingwordlutheran.net

Questions for Pastor...

Why are there so many languages?

I've mentioned before that one of the assignments I give our confirmation students is to come to class with a question about something relating to God, the Bible or what we believe. The question above is one I received recently. I like this question, because so often we just think "That's the way it is," and don't bother asking "How did it get that way?" When you find out the "history" behind something it usually takes on a whole new meaning.



Not all questions the students come up with have easy answers. This one does. God gives us the answer in Genesis 11:

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. 2 As people moved eastward they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

3 They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

5 But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. 6 The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

8 So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

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The people at Babel had the desire to exalt themselves instead of obeying God (in effect, they wanted to be god). They sought to make a monument to their own greatness. They wanted to stay in one place rather than obey God's command to Noah (9:1) to fill the earth. God saw their disobedient ambitions and knew the limitless wickedness and grief that would result (11:6) and in His grace introduced various new languages, so they would not be able to carry out their plans (11:7-8).



Thank God for the times He intervenes in our lives to keep us from going "whole hog" in the direction He has not planned for us!

Thanks for asking
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net



Ash Wednesday begins the 40-day season of Lent. This year Ash Wednesday falls on March 5. Ashes symbolize humility, remorse over sin and repentance. Many times in the Old Testament we read about people who put on sackcloth and covered themselves in ashes to show their grief over sin and their desire to repent and turn back to God. Ashes also suggest a need for cleansing, particularly the cleansing we celebrate at the end of Lent by the blood Jesus shed on Good Friday.

During our Ash Wednesday worship we each have a time to record our sins on a piece of paper. The confirmation students take those papers out and burn them, then they return with the ashes that are applied to our foreheads. This serves as a visual reminder that Jesus has taken our sins to the cross and paid for them there!

Please join us for worship at 6:30 p.m. on Ash Wednesday

Who Can You Invite...

LENTEN SOUP & SANDWICH SUPPERS:

5:00 - Prior to each Lenten Devotion Service
(Starting Wed, March 12)

Please sign up at church to bring either a soup or sandwiches on
March 12, 19 or 26 or on April 2 or 9 (or talk to Bonnie Hansen)



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Mark Your Calendar...

Mission & Ministry Team

Thursday, March 13th @ 6:30 p.m.
Elders' Team @ 5:30 prior to MMT



Building Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 4th @ 5:30 p.m. (Prior to Men's Study)

Women's Retreat...

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



Outreach News...

Community Festival / Block Party

Spring, 2025 -

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



It's Time to Start Planning for Summer Camp !

Lutheran Island Camp
Summer 2025 brochures
are available at church

That for a day: I may look busy, but I'm just confused.

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Upcoming Fellowship Outings...

Celebrate Birthdays

We will celebrate March birthdays on
Tuesday, March 11th @ 11:00
at Giovanni's (Willmar)



Court Whist Fellowship

Friday, March 21st @ 6:30
(at Pastor & Violet's home)

Please bring a snack to share.

Twins Game -

Saturday, June 7th.
1:10 Game time

You can choose which of three sections you'd like to sit:

Section 202 Wheelchair	\$29.12
Section 202	\$30.15
Section 102	\$49.70



Ordering details at church!



LWML Meeting & Women's Study:

Our next meeting and Bible study will be
Wednesday, March 5th @ 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.

Fellowship Photos...



BINGO



Bowling @ Alley on Ash



Opportunities for Growth...



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

Monthly Morning Women's Study:
March 5th @ 10:00
All ladies are invited!



Men's Study
Meets Tuesdays @ 6:30
(Come at 6:15 for food)
Study resumes January 7th

Communion Notes...

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated in December on the normal **First and Third Sundays (March 2nd & 16th)** as well as **Ash Wednesday (March 5th)**.



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
- **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.
- 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.

Choir News...

...Will begin practicing soon (after Sunday service) for our next event. Everyone is welcome to join.



The Duplex By Glenn McCoy



That for a day: About the only thing that comes to us without effort is old age.

Sunday School News..

Sunday School Lessons:

Just a glimpse ahead of what we will study in Sunday School:

- March 2: "I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life" John 14:6
- March 9: "I AM the Light of the World" John 8:12
- March 16: "I AM the True Vine" John 15:1,5
- March 23: "I AM the Resurrection and the Life" John 11:25
- March 30: "God Loves Me" Luke 15
- April 6: "A Most Precious Gift" Luke 12:1-8
- April 13: Palm Sunday "Praise Parade" Luke 19:28-40

Hope Pregnancy Center Fundraiser...

In honor of Sanctity of Human Life, Living Word Lutheran and the women of LWML invite you to join in donating **NEW** items to Hope Pregnancy Center's Baby Boutique. Until March 2nd, there will be a "Pack-N-Play" set up at church for you to bring your donations.



Confirmation News

- **Help with Ash Wednesday Service**
(Be here by 6:15)
- **Attend the Lenten Devotion Services**
(6:00 p.m. March 12, 19, 26 and April 2 and 9)
- **Class after Lenten Services** (6:45- 7:30)
- Remember to check the "PowerPoint Clicker" & Communion Wafer schedules.



E-Mail Humor...



A Trip To the Holy Land

A Scotsman, planning a trip to the Holy Land, was aghast when he found it would cost one hundred dollars an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

"Hoot mon," he said, "in Scotland it wouldna ha been more than \$20!"

"That might be true," said the travel agent, "but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord Himself walked."

"Well, at \$100 an hour for a boat," said the Scotsman, "it's no wonder He walked!"

The CEO was scheduled to speak at an important convention, so he asked one of his employees to write him a punchy, 20-minute speech.

When the CEO returned from the big event, he was furious.

"What's the idea of writing me an hour-long speech?" he demanded to know. "Half the audience walked out before I finished."

The employee was baffled. "I wrote you a 20-minute speech," he replied. "And I gave you the two extra copies you asked for."

It was an emotional day for me when my six-year-old twins headed off for their first day of school. Four-year-old Andrew and I accompanied them to the corner to wait for the bus.

When it arrived and the boys climbed on and waved good-bye, I could no longer hold back my tears.

"Don't cry, Mommy," said Andrew reassuringly. "Maybe one day you'll get to ride in a school bus too!"

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Thot for a day: I smile because I have no idea what's going on.

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

1. Attend Wednesday Lenten Services

(6:00 - 6:40 p.m., March 12, 19 and 26 and April 2 & 9)

Our Lenten Devotions will tackle this question:

"I know Jesus died and rose.

But what does that mean for my life right now?"

2. Read How God Shows His Love Through Jesus

Jesus is God in human flesh, so if you want to get to know God, get to know Jesus. The first two weeks of March our Daily Readings focus on ways Jesus shows He loves us - AND shows us how we should love each other.

3. Listen to God Speak to Us Through Philippians

The last three weeks of March we'll use the Apostle Paul's letter to the Christians at Philippi to learn about God in our Daily Readings.

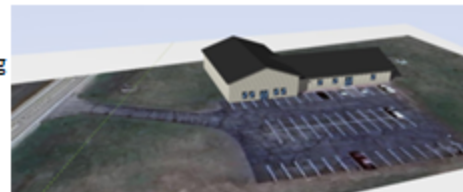
Pastor makes an audio recording of the Daily Readings along with a devotion based on them. He can text or email you a link to each day's recording. Just ask.

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

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 January 31st):

- Remaining Balance of Mortgage on current building: **ZERO !!!**
- Balance in CDs dedicated to New Sanctuary: **\$70,000+**

OUR NEXT BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING:

Tuesday, March 4th @ 5:30 (Prior to Men's Study)

Email Wisdom...

From Our Readings in God's Book of "Wisdom for Everyday" (Proverbs)

- Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice. Proverbs 13:10
- Whoever scorns instruction will pay for it, but whoever respects a command is rewarded. Proverbs 13:13
- Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm. Proverbs 13:20
- The wise fear the Lord and shun evil, but a fool is hotheaded and yet feels secure. Proverbs 14:16
- It is a sin to despise one's neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy. Proverbs 14:21
- A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones. Proverbs 14:30
- Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31
- A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1
- Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil. Proverbs 15:16
- A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel. Proverbs 15:18
- All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the Lord. Proverbs 16:2
- Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. Proverbs 16:3



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That for a day: Man, I had the slowest, rudest, nastiest cashier today. That's the last time I use the self-checkout lane.

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More Email Wisdom ...

Wisdom from an Old Farmer

- Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.
- Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- Words that soak into your ears are whispered...not yelled.
- Meanness don't jes' happen overnight.
- Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.
- Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
- It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.
- You cannot unsay a cruel word.
- Every path has a few puddles.
- When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- The best sermons are lived, not preached.
- Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
- Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
- Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.
- If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.
- The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with watches you from the mirror every mornin'.
- Always drink upstream from the herd.
- Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.
- Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.
- If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.



A Minute for Couples...

(from the Prepare-Enrich blog)

5 Secrets to Better Conversations

It's the end of a busy week. You're out to a relaxing dinner with your spouse, and you're both thrilled to be spending some quality time together. A few minutes of companionable silence pass by until one of you pipes up about – what else – the kids. You both chuckle over their antics, then move on to talking about their upcoming appointments and swapping drop-off/pickup duty on those days. Appetizers arrive, and you dig into those before changing the topic to this month's credit card bill.

If this sounds all too familiar, you're not alone. These practical, surface-level conversations are often what make up a good chunk of daily communication between spouses, and for good reason. They keep your household running smoothly and prevent logistical crossed wires, which can mean fewer unnecessary fights over said topics. And if you have kids – well, you love them and talking about them brings you endless joy, so of course you're going to do that.

At the same time, do you ever find yourself wishing your conversations were a little more... something? More playful and fun? More stimulating? Do you long for the days when deep discussions had you feeling closer than ever? We hear you. Here are our five secrets to better conversations with your spouse.

Stay connected on the mundane stuff.

It seems a bit counterintuitive, but if you want to have better conversations, make sure you're communicating about the seemingly boring, day-to-day stuff, too. Most days, you're not going to have lots of exciting stories to share. Even if your biggest update is that you tried a new place for lunch and they got your order wrong, share these things with each other. Staying in the know about the surface level stuff makes going deeper that much easier. Why? Because then you both have a wide context for each other's worlds that you don't have to spend much time explaining, allowing you to dive into the more profound stuff instead. It's sort of like when you've fallen out of touch with a friend. You typically have to catch up on all the basic life updates before you can jump into the serious, emotional stuff. The same idea applies to your marriage.

Be curious.

When you and your spouse have been together for a long time, it's



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That for a day: When planets run around and around in circles, we say they are orbiting. When people do it, we say they are crazy.

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easy to assume you know everything about each other. But people are continuously evolving, and that means there's always more to learn about one another – and yourselves! Instead of assuming you know their thought process, preferences, opinions, hopes, fears, etc., stay curious and ask questions to go beyond the surface level answers. By the same token, be curious about yourself. If your spouse asks you an inquisitive question, be open to some self-reflection so that you can give an answer that sparks even more conversation instead of shutting it down. This back and forth is key to growing together.

Create emotional safety.

In order to feel comfortable going deep and being vulnerable with each other, you need to have a sense of emotional safety and trust between you. This means you're not worried about being judged, criticized, shamed, or rejected for showing and sharing your true self. It means treating one another with empathy and kindness, and listening to understand each other better – not just when you're talking, but throughout all aspects of your relationship. When you both feel free to be your authentic selves with each other, the quality of your conversations will reflect this – whether they're silly, emotional, or reflective.

Get uncomfortable.

It's normal to have topics that you avoid talking about. Maybe they tend to stir up a fight, make you feel self-conscious, or stir up other unpleasant emotions for one reason or another. You can continue to tip-toe around these things, or you can learn to embrace the discomfort and face the issues head on. Sort of like pushing through the hard part of a workout or squashing your nerves before a big presentation, the discomfort pays off in the end. Not only will you feel closer and more connected, but you'll also gain valuable practice in working through issues that require those tough conversations.

Be intentional when you need to.

When everything is clicking between you, it feels like the conversation flows on its own. But sometimes, it can help to set some guidelines to steer the conversation in the direction you want. For example, on your date night maybe you make a rule of no talking about the kids for 20 minutes. Or seek out a resource that puts thought-provoking, relationship-focused questions at your fingertips – our Discussion Guide for Couples is perfect for this!

Surface-level discussions have a time and place in your marriage. But if you want to feel connected on a deeper level through the type of conversations you had early in your relationship, then these tips will help you set the stage for success.

March 2025 - Daily Readings

This Month we finish the passages where **God shows His love through Jesus**.
The rest of the month we let God speak to us through the **book of Philippians**.
Pastor records the readings (along with devotions based on the readings).
To receive these audio recordings daily, just email him: pastor@livingwordlutheran.net
NOTE: Email or text Pastor with questions you have on something you read.

WEEK OF MARCH 2: GOD SHOWS HOW TO LOVE THROUGH JESUS ...

- Mar 3 **John 2** _____

- Mar 4 **John 2** _____

- Mar 5 **John 6** _____

- Mar 6 **John 13** _____

- Mar 7 **John 15** _____

WEEK OF MARCH 9: GOD SHOWS HOW TO LOVE THROUGH JESUS ...

- Mar 10 **John 15** _____

- Mar 11 **John 19** _____

- Mar 12 **John 20** _____

- Mar 13 **Matthew 5** _____

- Mar 14 **Revelation 21-22** _____

WEEK OF MARCH 16: GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH PHILIPPIANS ...

- Mar 17 **Philippians 1:1-8** _____

- Mar 18 **Philippians 1:9-11** _____

- Mar 19 **Philippians 1:12-18** _____

- Mar 20 **Philippians 1:19-26** _____

- Mar 21 **Philippians 1:27-30** _____

WEEK OF MARCH 23: GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH PHILIPPIANS ...

- Mar 24 **Philippians 2:1-4** _____

- Mar 25 **Philippians 2:5-11** _____

- Mar 26 **Philippians 2:12-18** _____

- Mar 27 **Philippians 2:19-24** _____

- Mar 28 **Philippians 2:25-30** _____

WEEK OF MARCH 30: GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH PHILIPPIANS ...

- Mar 31 **Philippians 3:1-11** _____

- Apr 1 **Philippians 3:12-16** _____

- Apr 2 **Philippians 3:17-4:1** _____

- Apr 3 **Philippians 4:2-3** _____

- Apr 4 **Philippians 4:4-9** _____

Recordings of the Daily Readings can also be found on our website at:

<https://www.livingwordlutheran.net/devotions.htm>

March 2025 - Living Word Lutheran - Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 9:00 - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP w/Communion 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	3	4 5:30 - BUILDING TEAM 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	5 ASH WEDNESDAY 10:00 - LWML & WOMEN'S STUDY 6:30 - ASH WED. SERVICE w/Communion	6	7	8
				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #d4edda;"> Lord's Supper Dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunday, March 2nd Ash Wed, March 5th Sunday, March 16th </div>		
9 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	10	11 11:00 - MARCH B-DAYS @ GIOVANNI'S 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	12 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION 6:45 - CONFIRMATION	13 5:30 - ELDERS' TEAM 6:30 - MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM	14	15
16 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP w/communion 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	17	18 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	19 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION 6:45 - CONFIRMATION	20	21 6:30 COURT WHIST CARDS @ Pastor & Violet's	22
23 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	24	25 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	26 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION 6:45 - CONFIRMATION	27	28	29
30 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	31	April 1 5:30 - BUILDING TEAM 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	Apr 2 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION 6:45 - CONFIRMATION	Apr 3 6:00 FELLOWSHIP SUPPER @ SWEET RIVER CAFE	Apr 4	Apr 5

Upcoming Schedules...

After-Worship Fellowship

We will have coffee / water and cookies at 11:15 after worship .Please join us when you can!
...and, if you can, please sign up to serve coffee and goodies some Sunday. Thanks!



Usher Schedule

Mar 2 Wendy & Lonny Robbin
Mar 9 Jason & Levi Miller
Mar 16 Pam Johnson & Linda Vanmeter
Mar 23 Larry Levin & Jim Stinson
Mar 30

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

Mar 2, 16 Scott & Kevin
Mar 9, 23 Duane & Dan

Custodian

March Duane and Bonnie Hansen

Children's Church

Mar 2 - Alison Sarsland
Mar 9 - Violet Dauk
Mar 16 - Sarah Olson
Mar 23 - Levi Miller
Mar 30 - Violet Dauk



Power Point Clicker

Mar 2 Carter
Ash Wed Evelyn
Mar 9 Parker
Mar 16 Ella
Mar 23 Troy
Mar 30



Communion Bread Maker

Mar 2 Kjirsten

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That for a day: To keep milk from turning sour, keep it in the cow.

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Altar Guild

March Mona Hjelle

Accompanying Musicians

Mar 2 Sharon Willen
Ash Wed Sharon Willen
Mar 9 Scott Wachter
Mar 16 Scott Wachter
Mar 23 Sharon Willen
Mar 30 Scott Wachter



Directory Update...



A sample is available at church.

(Price and Order Sheet as well)

Thanks!

"Participate" in Worship from home...

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

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG9eU-VviJEU22yCYxbhwig/featured>

Seen on Church Signboards...

**Hot Chocolate
and God's Word:
Both Warm the Soul**

March Discipleship Verse...

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" Romans 12:2

Basic LERT Training...

Redeemer Lutheran Church,
Willmar MN

May 3, 2025

9:30 AM -- 4:00 PM

Redeemer Lutheran Church in Willmar is hosting a Basic LERT training is on Saturday, May 3, 2025, 9:30am to 4:00 pm. Congregations are encouraged to send a group of people to this training so that you can continue as a LERT-trained team when you get back home.

The cost is \$35 per person and payable at the event. This includes all materials, refreshments and lunch. Checks payable: "MN North District-LERT training".

We need a minimum of 12 pre-registrations TEN DAYS PRIOR to the event or the event may be cancelled. Walk-ins are permitted but materials cannot be guaranteed.

Learn more about LERT or register for the training online at the LCMS website: www.lcms-lert.org

Any questions, contact: Rev. John Beck who is one of our District Disaster Response Coordinators and LERT Trainers, by email john6beck@gmail.com or phone (320) 249-4012.



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Thot for a day: Had a slight headache this morning but felt much better after following the directions on the aspirin bottle: Take two and keep away from children.

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 February we thanked God for...

- **Friends**

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



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Living Word's 2025 Goals Update...

- Continue the Make A Meal program.
We made more meals on January 25th
- Continue the monthly Fellowship outings: Birthdays and Supper
Tuesday, March 11th & Friday, March 21st
- Continue the Birthday Card/Anniversary ministry
Ongoing
- Challenge every member to bring a guest this year
Be praying about who you can invite to Holy Week Services
- Create a Visitors Table (Coffee, giveaways along with church and prayer ministry info)
Check out our new "Visitors (and members) Coffee Cart"
- Initiate the "Prayer D-Fence" Program
(Adults "adopting" a kid to pray for, send cards etc...)
Currently looking for a coordinator
- Start a Prayer Ministry - with people praying for/with others after the Sunday Service
Began in January
- A Concert!! (Summer...outdoor)
- Chili Cook-Off
Held on January 18th
- Host a Block Party or Community Festival in the Spring
- Focus on the National Youth Gathering event for youth
7 youth are signed up to attend in July
- Coordinating with Redeemer, Willmar and St. John, Atwater to host joint youth events
- Continue weekly Youth Gatherings
on break during Lent
- Keep the church yard looking nice and continue to de-clutter the storage areas inside.
Ongoing

Remember to wear your Living Word Apparel...



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!



What is Ash Wednesday?

Ash Wednesday is March 5th this year. It marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days of fasting and penance that culminate in Easter Sunday. Parishioners around the world will have the sign of the cross made on their foreheads with ashes to mark the holy day. While Ash Wednesday and Lent have been observed by Catholics and some Protestants for centuries, today, more Protestants also choose to observe the tradition. But what are Ash Wednesday and Lent? And what is the Bible's role in their origins and traditions?



Though Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, Lent is the older of the two. Lent was established and accepted only after the early church sorted out how to calculate the date of Easter. At the Council of Nicaea in AD 325, "all the Churches agreed that Easter, the Christian Passover, should be celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox." Since the spring equinox usually falls on March 21, the date of Easter in the Western Church can occur anytime between March 22 and April 25.

At Nicaea, the council settled on the 40-day fast period for Lent because it has roots in biblical writings. God sends rain on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights when Noah and his family go into the ark (Genesis 7:4). Moses sits atop Mount Sinai receiving instructions from God for 40 days (Exodus 24:18). Elijah "walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb" when he flees Jezebel's wrath (1 Kings 19:8). The 40 days of Lent, however, are primarily identified with the time Jesus spent in the desert fasting, praying, and being tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11). But though the length of Lent was set by the council, its start date in relation to Easter was still undecided.

It was not until AD 601 that the start date of Lent was set. Pope Gregory moved the start of Lent to 46 days before Easter, and established Ash Wednesday at the same time. This allowed for 40 days of

That for a day: The worst thing about history is that every time it repeats itself, the price goes up.

fasting—where only one full meal and no meat are to be consumed—with six Sundays counted as feast days—when fasting does not apply—for a total of 46 days. He also established the tradition of marking parishioners' foreheads with ashes in the shape of a cross. But why ashes?

The symbolism of marking oneself with ashes traces its history to ancient traditions. The liturgical use of ashes can be seen in the Old Testament, where they denote mourning, mortality, and penance. In Esther 4:1, Mordecai puts on sackcloth and ashes when he hears of the decree of King Ahasuerus of Persia to kill all of the Jewish people in the Persian Empire. In Job 42:6, at the end of his confession, Job repents in sackcloth and ashes. And in the city of Nineveh, after Jonah preaches of conversion and repentance, all the people proclaim a fast and put on sackcloth, and even the king covers himself with sackcloth and sits in ashes, as told in Jonah 3:5-6.

In the early Catholic Church, Eusebius, a church historian, wrote in his book *The History of the Church* that once an apostate named Natalis came to Pope Zephyrinus dothed in sackcloth and ashes, begging for forgiveness. By the Middle Ages, those who were dying lay on the ground on top of sackcloth and were sprinkled with ashes. The priest would bless the dying person with holy water, saying, "Remember that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return."

These words are still uttered today by the minister, deacon, or priest when they mark the foreheads of their parishioners. Another admonition sometimes given is "Repent and believe in the Gospel." The connection of the ashes to the Gospels, which record the life of Jesus, comes from their preparation. The ashes used each year are traditionally made from burning the blessed palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration, which commemorates the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem the week of his death. Making the sign of the cross with these ashes ties the beginning of Lent, 46 days earlier, to the commencement of holy week the Sunday before Easter.

Today, Ash Wednesday is one of the most heavily attended non-Sunday church services, even though it is not a holy day of obligation in the liturgical year. Worship services are also held on Ash Wednesday in Anglican, Lutheran, and some other Protestant churches, who also sometimes observe Lent. Most importantly, however, Ash Wednesday and Lent lead up to the holiest day in the Christian calendar, Easter, which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus. Ashes and fasting, both drawing on several biblical traditions, create a season of penitence and expectation as Easter approaches. In this way, the Bible's impact on our rituals and sense of sacred time becomes clear.

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
- March Newsletters
- January-March 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>

Feb 2 "It doesn't matter how old you are - you are valued"

Feb 9 "What does it look like to 'Love at all times'"

Feb 16 "Jesus shocks the crowd."

Feb 23 "What Jesus meant when He said, "Don't judge others"

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.

Offering Envelopes

Offering Envelopes Are Available for 2025—If you like to use dated envelopes for your offerings, we have them available. Just pick up a box of envelopes from under the mailboxes. Write down the # of the box you picked up. Thanks!

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That for a day: It's good to have self-confidence. It's even better to have a reason for it.

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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:

- Asking God to show you what to "give up" and/or "take up" during Lent
- Asking God for the power to love like Jesus did - with sacrifice
- Thanking God for getting us through the coldest part of winter
- For all those who are home-bound or in nursing facilities
- Continued wisdom for guidance and decisions (BIG and small)
- Safe travel (and good weather for traveling)
- For God's peace, comfort and direction for all who lost loved ones
- Asking God's continued 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 !
- 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

After-Worship Prayer Ministry



We're looking for a few more people who have a passion for praying!!! We meet a few minutes after church to pray with and for each other.

Talk to Tammy Miller if interested

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



Help Record our Worship Services . . .

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

Remember the Teal's Rebate Program.

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



Custodian Volunteers Needed.

For March and any month after April 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.



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.

That for a day: I'm trying to organize a hide and seek tournament. But good players are really hard to find.

Christian Music Media News...

The January newsletter introduced a new Brandon Lake song, "Hard Fought Hallelujah". I am a Brandon Lake fan and this is a great song. But, it was re-released this month as a collaboration between Brandon Lake and country superstar Jelly Roll and has become very successful. Jelly Roll is a fairly controversial artist to present Christian music due to his history... but his life is an excellent story of redemption and how God can use unexpected people to present His message. Make no mistake, Jelly Roll is hugely popular and as a result this Christian song and its message is being introduced to an entirely new audience and is making an impact on people who don't currently listen to Christian music. I highly recommend watching a recent K-Love interview with them about the collaboration and the effect it is having at <https://youtu.be/1A0Fk7hf4cw>

Watch Brandon and Jelly Roll perform the song live at the Grand Ole Opry <https://youtu.be/D9iFy7XtwPo>

As a bonus, here is the CMA Awards presentation of "I Believe" with Brooks & Dunn from 3 months ago that is discussed in the interview... <https://youtu.be/ZEbqlvaBLg0>

The creators of Veggie Tails have released a new animated show... "The Dead Sea Squirrels." Featuring well known voice actors and original songs by Christian artists like Mac Powell, Matthew West, and many more. The show is featured on Minno children's streaming platform (<https://gominno.com>).

Watch the trailer at <https://youtu.be/TPcMjeS-H-4>

St Patrick's Day is coming in a few weeks. One of the new songs released this month is "The Prayer of St Patrick" by the Irish group Rend Collective. Listen at https://youtu.be/XPaC_ZuVa0k.

Rend Collective will have a concert in Willmar at Living Hope Church on March 21st. Tickets are still available. More information and to purchase tickets go to <https://tinyurl.com/5n7ifnhf>

Another new song is "40" by for King & Country. This song is featured on the new series "House of David" about King David on Prime video. Though not entirely biblically accurate, this is still a great show and I recommend it. Listen at <https://youtu.be/JCxtKigD6NE>

Email Inspiration...

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on. As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up, and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes.

My heart went out to him. So I jogged over to him, and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives." He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.

I helped him pick up his books and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before, but we talked all the way home, and I carried his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play football on Saturday with me and my friends. He said yes.

We hung out all weekend, and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him. And my friends thought the same of him. Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak.

On graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and

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That for a day: It only takes one therapist to change a lightbulb but it must want to change.

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actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than me and all the girls loved him! Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech, so I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!" He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat and began.

"Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach -- but mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story." I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture, you can change a person's life.



If Jesus feeds the 5000 today...

Monthly Music Videos...

Here is the rest of the recommended new music for the month from some favorite artists and some you've probably don't know.

- One more from Sidewalk Prophets, "Power of a Tender Heart"... <https://youtu.be/lQuR2Mqzpac>
- Cochren & Co has a great new song is called "Love Is A Fight"... <https://youtu.be/iLAMVZaOLwM>
- After more than 7 years without a new release, Plumb has released "Fighter (I'm Not Afraid)"... <https://youtu.be/723Xk9dzdEE>
- NEEDTOBREATHE has a new song featuring Tori Kelly, "I've Got A Story"... <https://youtu.be/Mhm40E7UleI>
- "Better Yet" is the latest release from Leanna Crawford... <https://youtu.be/ps8Vgag425A>
- Meagan Danielle just released "Honey Sweet"... <https://youtu.be/XYAidEldXOY>
- A great song by Josh Baldwin is "Thank You Jesus"... <https://youtu.be/uhE8NCg7Qc>
- Not exactly classified as Christian, but I really like Larry Fleet and his song, "Hard Work and Holy Water"... <https://youtu.be/8EMVR3YdirO>
- "Can't Stop Me" is a new song by Toby Mac... <https://youtu.be/BMOu1SHx4ZU>
- "I'm Always Talking To Jesus" is a new song from NewSong... https://youtu.be/39u8W2tnK_0
- Phil Wickham has a new release "The King Is In The Room"... <https://youtu.be/AYDKFuxSrJA>
- "Runs Deep" is the latest from Riley Clemmons... <https://youtu.be/sVQ5u1hVXPA>
- A great new worship song by George Case is "Praise You More"... <https://youtu.be/O28fb73PAc8>
- Forrest Frank with Thomas Rhett has released "Nothing Else"... <https://youtu.be/tcqpK6SFw60>
- Finally, American Idol alum, Phil Tracey and his daughter, McKayla released "More Like Him"... <https://youtu.be/dcNYe7mopT8>

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That for a day: I wonder what my parents did to fight boredom before the internet? I asked my 18 siblings and they don't know either.

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Story Behind The Song...

St Patrick's Day is on March 17th and the history of that day is not all about green adult beverages and corned beef. The hymn that most often comes to mind for St Patrick is "Be Thou My Vision". It's one of the most loved songs of all times. The medieval melody brings images of rolling hills and Scottish highlands.

But very few people know the story behind the song. In fact, the history of *Be Thou My Vision* is as ancient and mysterious as the haunting hymn itself. A quick look in a hymnal offers little help. Ambiguous entries like "Irish Melody" and "Anonymous" appear where the name of the composer and lyricist typically belong.

The story behind *Be Thou My Vision* begins with St. Patrick. When he was just sixteen years old, pirates kidnapped Patrick and sold him into slavery in Ireland. This caused him to enter adulthood knowing the Gaelic language and Irish customs. He also became a Christian during this time. Years later, he managed to escape and return home to his family in England. While most would've stayed home forever, Patrick chose to go back to Ireland and become a missionary!

What does all this have to do with *Be Thou My Vision*? On Easter Sunday in 433, the local Irish king issued a decree in observation of a pagan Druid festival that prohibited anyone from lighting a flame or candle. Patrick, refusing to honor anyone but Christ, stood against the king. That morning, Patrick risked his life by climbing to the tallest hill in the area and lighting a huge fire. As the ancient Irish people woke up, they could all see Patrick's defiance of the king. He could not hide his light. Patrick wanted to show the world that God's light shines in darkness, and that only He deserves praise.

Years later, an unknown composer wrote a melody in honor of Patrick's heroism. Called, "Slane," the now-forgotten composer named it after the hill where Patrick shined his light: Slane Hill. People still recognize the tune today.

While the story behind the melody is legendary, the history behind the lyrics is much more obscure. Tradition tells us that an Irish poet from the 6th century named St. Dallán Forgaill wrote a Gaelic poem entitled *Rop tú mo Baile*, in honor of St. Patrick. Borrowing from another medieval poem, *St. Patrick's Breastplate*, Forgaill's lyrics referred to God as his "battle shield" and "high tower," phrases that still exist in the modern version today.

Sadly, the oldest existing copy of Forgaill's poem comes from the 14th century, which included no indication of its author. Because no other

historical evidence connects Forgaill to the poem, it's impossible to verify the actual origin of the lyrics to *Be Thou My Vision*. As a result, most hymnals attribute the song to "Anonymous."

In 1905, nearly fifteen hundred years after Saint Patrick lit a flame on Slane Hill, the forgotten hymn re-emerged from the mists of time. Mary Byrne, a 25-year-old university student, discovered the 14th century copy of *Rop tú mo Baile* and translated it into English for the very first time.

It that moment, the now-hallowed lyrics, "Be thou my vision... oh Lord of my heart" sprang from the forgotten pages of time and into the modern world. Later in 1912, an Irish woman named Eleanor Hull set the words to music. The melody she set it to was none other than "Slane," the medieval tune written in honor of St. Patrick. The hymn became famous overnight and appeared in its first hymnal in 1919. In 2019, the world celebrated the 100th anniversary of the modern version of *Be Thou My Vision*.

The story behind *Be Thou My Vision* is the story of the Gospel. In God's timing, He took what the world ignored and made it something beautiful. As far as man was concerned, music like *Rop tú mo Baile* and *Slane* were dead-nothing more but irrelevant fragments from antiquity. But God took what was dead and made it alive again. He took what was ancient and made it new.

So is *Be Thou My Vision* an old song? Yes and no. Just like he took dusty pages of lyrics and infused it with new life, He took us and our sinful flesh and infused us with His Spirit.

Be Thou My Vision is a song of new life. It's the song of the new life of St. Patrick, who shined his light for Christ. It's the song of the new life in Ireland, where dead paganism gave way to centuries of vibrant faith. It's the song of new life in the singer's heart, where God shines His forgiveness in a sinful soul. And it is the song of new life for the hymn itself, which millions now enjoy again after centuries of obscurity.

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;

Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

A great version of this hymn is by Shane and Shane...
<https://youtu.be/bgLHar8VWJI>

Bonus song this month is a new recording of "Goodness of God" by Anthem Lights... <https://youtu.be/zOzuB1Lytd8>

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson

Now this **SHAMROCK** in me
hand is the perfect
picture of the
HOLY TRINITY
Where **FATHER,**
SON, and
HOLY GHOST
are **ONE.**



A great object lesson is made here by **Ol' St. Paddy** himself.

Happy St Patrick's Day