



*What dreams do you have for the future growth of Living Word?*

This is a question similar to the one on cards handed out to everyone who attended our Dedication Service. On that card we were looking for answers that are a bit more specific to God's purposes for our *building*:

*My Vision / Dream for the future of this building is ....*

If you weren't able to attend the dedication or didn't come up with an answer to put on your card, you still have a chance. We'll be collecting those "Dream/Vision" cards the next few Sundays. We will then add them to the "Time Capsule" that we are putting together to give future members of Living Word a glimpse of what was going on in our congregation at the time our new facility was dedicated.. It will be interesting to open the Time Capsule 15 or 20 years down the road and see how many of the building dreams and visions became reality.

Back to the question above. That question was posed to me by Rev. Mike Ruhl who heads up the Missouri Synod's Center for U.S. Missions. Some of you met Pastor Ruhl when he was here in 2011 for our Strategic Planning Weekend.

I had three (at least) answers for that question. Here's the first - and in my mind, the most important:

My first dream is that we would be known in the community as a church that leads people to a life-changing relationship with Jesus - not a place where people just "go through the motions of church"

After all, the purpose of Living Word is to make disciples for Jesus. A disciple is someone who seeks to

- 1) Know Jesus (not just know stuff *about* Him),
- 2) Grow to be like Jesus, and
- 3) Go into their world to help others do the same.

Knowing Jesus, growing to become like Him and going to share Him with others is indeed life-changing.

This kind of life-change happens best as people get involved in small groups within the church. Groups that get together for study, for fellowship and for undertaking service projects. In fact, a member of one of our study groups made this comment recently, "Being a part of this study group has changed my life." That's not a coincidence. That's how God works and that is our goal.

My second answer:

That Living Word would grow numerically to a place where we are able to move onto Building Phase 2 within five years.

A couple of the "Building Dreams and Visions" cards came back with similar answers. One example, "*My dream is that this building would quickly become too small.*"

When Pastor Strohschein, who preached for our Dedication Service, asked what our Dedication Sunday theme was going to be, I told him, "We're not done yet." (i.e. "We aren't celebrating the 'end' of our

project, but rather the 'beginning' of what God has planned to do in, with and through us."

Phase 1 of our Building Project was simply to get us "started." It was designed to be a multi-purpose space that would accommodate worship, fellowship, and classes but was not designed to be adequate for any of these long-term. Phase 2 will add a dedicated worship space and will allow us to transform the Phase 1 area into more dedicated classroom and fellowship space.

My final answer:

That Living Word would build on its "Family-Friendly" reputation and be able to add a Christ-Centered Pre-school or a home-school center.

The best time to start making disciples is when those disciples are little. Kids are not the future of the church, they are part of the church right now.

So, what are *your* dreams for Living Word ? Please take time to fill out one of the cards at worship. Or you can simply email your answer to me at [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net).

Thanks for asking (and answering),  
Pastor David

Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)