LIVING WORDS

LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH 438.9672 CHURCH NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER





MERCY MEALS

Twenty people were there to package 22 cases, 792 packages, 4752 meals to be distributed anywhere in the world to people in need of nutrition. The best part, so many smiles while serving! Thank you, God, for letting us be your willing servants.

In Christ, ***Sue DeJong***











Mark your Calendars: The Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 15,** following the worship service. All members are encouraged to attend.

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LCMC CONFERENCE

Unleashed

Thank you so much, Living Word family, for sending us to the LCMC Conference in Des Moines as your representatives and delegates. There were about 900 attendees learning, worshipping and praising God together.

The theme for the four day event was from Galatians 5:1-13. We are unleashed, free from being slaves to sin, free for standing firm in the Gospel and free to share the Good News of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

There were four worship services, two offering Holy Communion. They used different styles of worship, from contemporary to highly liturgical. The offerings collected were to help bring our overseas missionaries to the 2027 conference in Missouri.

Over $4000 was received during the Sunday evening service. Another offering was collected at the Wednesday closing service. We don't know that amount as of yet. A $10,000 matching gift has been offered.

The Servant Event on Tuesday was for Convoy of Hope. We helped to pack 5,760 hygiene kits in about one hour, 400 boxes on 8 pallets, to send wherever needed in the United States and around the world.

We enjoyed the Bible studies each day presented by Pastor Sarah Stensen from Luther House Seminary.

Other keynote speakers were Pastor David Zahl, Pastor Tara Beth Leach and Pastor Mike Housholder from the host congregation at Hope Lutheran in Des Moines.

We were able to attend the Augustana District meeting and each of us attended three great breakout sessions.

We also attended the Global Missions Fellowship Dinner. Pastor Bill Moberly with ALWM participated in the program and the prayers.

We missed the choir practice for the closing worship. Oops! We got lost and went into the wrong room. We got pizza though!

Thank you for sending us as your representatives to this amazing, educational and uplifting conference. We are truly blessed to be a blessing.

Your servants in Christ,

Tim and Sue DeJong









Little Hands, BIG Hearts

Our middle school youth helped celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month with a fun and heartfelt reader's theater honoring Pastor Melanie! The younger children joined in the celebration with pom-poms, cheers, and plenty of enthusiasm! The students also presented Pastor Melanie with individual thank-you cards they had made during Sunday School and Dynamic Disciples. What a wonderful way to show our appreciation for someone who gives so much to our church family!

Our Gospel House Mission is growing! As of October 21, we have raised an amazing $1,575 for the Gospel House children in Vietnam! That is enough to help support all FOUR children's homes with basic necessities for over THREE months! What a blessing! Thank you to everyone who has donated and supported this mission. Your generosity is making a difference in the lives of children halfway around the world. God is using our little church to do BIG things!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **DECEMBER 13 – Youth Christmas Program**
  Our children will share the wonderful story of Christmas during the worship service! Mark your calendars and come celebrate the greatest gift of all—JESUS!
- **MAY 31-June 4 – CRAVE Vacation Bible School**
  Yes, we're already planning VBS! We'll be holding it one week earlier this year because several of our wonderful volunteers have weddings and other commitments later in June. We can't wait for another exciting week of faith, friendship, music, and unforgettable adventures!

A final thought...

Whether our children are cheering for their pastor, helping a nursing home resident play bingo, laughing in a corn bin, or raising money for children halfway around the world, they are learning what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Thank you to our parents, volunteers, congregation, and everyone who supports our youth ministries. We are planting seeds of faith, kindness, and love that we pray will continue to grow for years to come.

God is good, and we are blessed!






Faith, Friends and Fall Adventures

What a fun-filled month for Dynamic Disciples! We started October at church with our usual favorites—FOOD (of course!), music, Bible lessons, and some outdoor fun! We especially enjoy it when our confirmation students join us for a little while at the end of our afternoon. The more, the merrier!

Our next adventure took us to St. Williams Care Center, where we shared cookies, bingo, and lots of smiles with our friends there. I couldn't have been prouder of our students! They sat beside the residents, helped with bingo cards and prizes, and, most importantly, took time to visit and make someone else's day a little brighter. We wrapped up our visit with some playdough fun! Sometimes the best lessons about serving others aren't taught in a classroom—they're learned by simply showing kindness and love.

The following week, we headed to Tim and Sheila Miller's farm for an afternoon of God's wonderful outdoors! From the moment we arrived, the kids NEVER stopped moving! There were games, swings, scooters, a tree fort, rides in the 4x4, and pumpkins to pick for carving. And then there was the CORN BIN! Let's just say getting everyone out of there when it was time to leave was quite the challenge!

We had planned some indoor activities, but we never even made it inside! And you know what? That was perfectly fine. Sometimes the best classroom is God's great outdoors, where we can see His amazing creation, hear children's laughter, and enjoy the simple blessings of being together.

A special thank-you to Tim and Sheila for sharing their farm and giving our children such wonderful memories!









Love In Fellowship and Truth

Exciting things are happening with our new LIFT youth group! We were thrilled to see our new sign added to the Disciple Den this past month! We're also working on transforming the inside hallway into a welcoming space for our youth. It's fun to see everything coming together!

Kelly and Colette are busy planning a S'MORE FUN evening on Oct. 28 from 5–7:00 p.m. There will be fellowship, fun, and hopefully some deliciously gooey treats! After all, everything is a little better with chocolate and marshmallows!

Our LIFT T-shirts have also been ordered, so watch for them popping up around church and throughout the community. We love seeing our youth proudly representing their faith and their church family!

LIFT is about more than just getting together once a month. It's about building friendships, growing in faith, serving others, and reminding our young people that they belong to something special—a church family that loves and supports them.



"Maybe Today!"

The calendar is moving us into the month of November. Along with that, before the month ends, we will begin our weeks of Advent, preparing our hearts, once again, for the arrival of the Christ Child. This year's mid-week services will be held on December 2, 9, and 16. Each evening will begin with a soup supper starting at 5:15 p.m. followed by the service at 6:30 p.m. The basis for each week will be taken from the "Maybe Today!" advent devotional messages by Scott Suskovic. Each Wednesday evening will include several of the favorite hymns of the season. Hopefully, many of you will be able to join in for these evenings of fellowship.

ADVENT BEGINS ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29.



On Sunday, October 25, the quilters set out a display of 60 brightly colored quilts they made throughout the year for the congregation to see and enjoy. Then the ladies packed the quilts for their journey this month to Sierra Leone. The group in the picture meet the second and fourth Tuesday morning of every month to make the quilts. They invite others, whether an experienced quilter or not, to join them in this activity. They are, left to right: Karen McCrea, Karen Hallquist, Darla Loeschke, Marcia Heinje, and Gloria Cooley (not pictured: Lenore Kalber). This group of ladies also make the quilts given to graduating seniors, newly baptized members, fund raisers, and other special events. The quilters even take a mid-morning break for coffee and goodies! Please feel free to join them in this fun activity!

WOMEN OF LIVING WORD

Thankful

November. The month for giving thanks, and I hope all of you have much for which to be thankful! The Women of Living Word definitely have many things for which to be thankful.

Our **QUARTERLY MEETING** for the LWL Women was held October 7 in the church fellowship hall. It was a very good turn out with 15 women attending. Thank you very much to all who shared their time and ideas that evening. Many different things were discussed, great ideas for the future changes were brought up, and the slate of officers for the coming year was discussed. Revisions to the circle booklet were also reviewed. Those who attended enjoyed snacks, and Marcia Heinje was the door prize winner.

Please remember that if you or anyone in your family are in need of **GREETING CARDS** there is an excellent selection in the card nook located outside the nursery. They truly are beautiful cards with such lovely verses.

MERCY MEALS were packed at the Orphan Grain Train building on Sunday, October 11, followed by the chili cook-off meal at the church. The chilis were judged and prizes awarded. Everyone enjoyed a meal of chili, bread, and bars.

The **MISSION PROJECT** for November is the Mitten Tree. The tree is set up in the Fellowship Hall. Mittens and gloves of all sizes are greatly appreciated. At times there are needs for stocking caps and scarves as well.

REMINDER: the two circles will meet November 17 for their monthly Bible study; the morning circle meets at the church at 9 a.m. and the evening circle meets at 7 p.m. at the church.

Plans are underway for the annual **ST. LUCIA BREAKFAST** to be held on Saturday, December 12, at 9:30 a.m. If there is anyone who would like to learn about this wonderful tradition, please contact Linda Anderson.

As I said when I began this column, November is the month of thanks. Living Word is very fortunate to have so many great programs and people to lead those programs. I challenge all the women of our congregation this month to do two things. **1)** Thank one person who makes something great happen at Living Word (i.e. teaches SS, participates in Sunday music, runs the screen and soundboard, hands out bulletins, counts money, leads a Bible study, cleans the church, etc.) and **2)** Think of one program or element of the church that happens here that you do not know about and learn about it. Ask questions. Find out what it entails. Who is involved in it? Why is it important? Learn. You may be very amazed and…you may find something more for you.

Sandy Christensen
Women of Living Word Coordinator

LWLC FAMILY

Tis the Season to Be Thankful!

Hello everyone and Happy November! Tis the season to be thankful!

As we approach November, I think it is always a great reminder to renew our minds and hearts as we become more intentional to look for and meditate on what we are GRATEFUL for. Did you know that the regular practice of gratitude can improve a person's overall mental and physical health, including lessening anxiety, reducing depression, supporting heart health, relieving stress, and improving sleep? Wow! Even if we disregard medical research on this topic, let's meditate on what Philippians 4:6-8 states:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

The Call Committee recently received three applications and is currently interviewing, praying, and looking into these candidates. Thank you for continuing to pray for them and for the next pastor of Living Word. We continue to look to God for guidance, discernment, and wisdom because we want what He wants and we choose to trust Him and surrender to His will. Another area that we are seeking His guidance is the future of our church, including adding on to our existing building. There are no plans in place, but I just wanted you to know that the Church Council still talks about the possibility and what that might look like.

Reminder: The deadline to turn in the reports to the church office for the annual report is Monday, November 2.

November 15 will be our annual meeting. Thank you for making plans to attend. At that time three new Council members will begin new terms. I want to thank Tim DeJong and Laurie Maas for faithfully and generously serving on Council these last three years and Sharon Hyde who graciously joined us this past year to help fill a vacancy. When you see these three people, please thank them for the countless hours of meetings, a willingness to serve, and a dedication to our church. It takes many parts of the body for a church to function! And that includes all of YOU as well! Whatever your role is, even if you think it is small, know that it is needed and appreciated.

I am GRATEFUL for each one of you! And for God's love and what Jesus did for each one of us.

Love to all, Jackie

OUTREACH

November Noisy Change

Noisy Change for the month of November will go to the Visiting Neighbor Program. This program is designed to assist the elderly and disabled people of Grant County. Services include assistance with personal care, laundry, and light housekeeping duties, which gives residents the ability to remain independent in their homes. If you would like to learn more about the program or are in need of assistance, please contact coordinator Marie Loutsch at 605-949-0510.



PASTOR'S LETTER



Season of Thankfulness

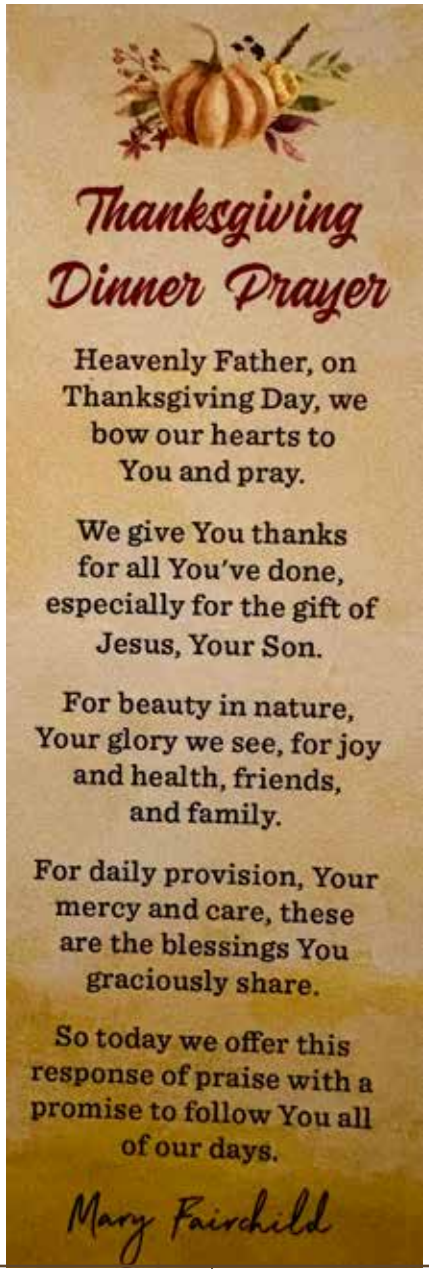
DEAR CHURCH FAMILY OF LIVING WORD,

As we enter this annual season of thankfulness in the month of November, we are reminded of the encouragement we receive from the Apostle Paul. "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

The Apostle Paul didn't write these words to people who had a lot of reasons to celebrate. He wrote these words to the church in Philippi that was facing persecution. How could he say such a thing to people who are suffering?

Well, Paul himself knew a thing or two about suffering. In fact, he wrote these words from prison, and he wanted to share with his church family a secret for navigating life's hardships.

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength," Paul writes in Philippians 4:12-13.



Is it possible to rejoice and give thanks in the face of suffering? Paul would say a resounding "yes." But not on our own.

Paul tells us that it is only through the strength of Christ that he can be content in any situation. We can try and try on our own strength to be grateful in all circumstances, but ultimately our efforts will fall short. Paul has learned the secret that **even gratitude is a gift.**

In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul exhorts another church facing persecution to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Easier said than done! The truth is that we cannot be thankful in every circumstance by our own willpower. **The fact that it's God's will for us to be thankful means that He will empower us to do it.** He will encourage us and make us a thankful people.

(Adapted from *The Story of Paul by James Kallas*)

In Christian love,
Pastor Melanie



WoW Gathering Recap

On Saturday, September 19, about 80 women (along with 8 Zoom sites) gathered at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Mankato, Minnesota for the annual WOW Gathering. This year, the theme was *"The Resurrection: This changes everything!"* Rev. Aaron Deutsch led the opening worship with a meditation based on Luke 24:1-12, the story of the women at the tomb. An offering was taken for Global Health Ministries: The Madagascar Health and Water program.

Rev. Julie Smith shared two sessions with attendees on how the resurrection of Jesus changes everything. Through baptism, we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection. Because Christ lives, we no longer live in fear, shame, or despair, but in freedom and promise. Women from across the district gathered around God's Word, prayer, worship, and fellowship to explore what it means to die and rise with Christ each day, with time to reflect on how the resurrection shapes our identity, hope, relationships, and life together as God's faithful people.

In the afternoon, breakout sessions were offered, and women could choose one of four options.

- "Oh death, where is thy sting?" by Rev. Julie Smith exploring how the hope of the resurrection empowers us to offer meaningful comfort to those who mourn.
- Global Health Ministries: based out of Minneapolis, this organization believes everyone deserves access to quality healthcare and regularly packs medical supplies for communities worldwide.
- Madagascar Health and Wellness Project: Dr. Andry Ranaivooson led a conversation on Madagascar's Androv region where severe drought threatens communities with family and water scarcity. This is the organization that the offering supported.
- Options for Women: this organization offers compassionate care and resources for women. Dedicated to providing education and programs that parents need to feel supported.

A midday break was taken for a delicious lunch with sandwiches, soup, pasta salad, fruit, and delicious homemade bars for dessert.

The ladies of the host church worked hard on many of the small details, from beautiful fresh flowers on the tables, handmade crocheted bookmarkers, resurrection cookies (and recipes), and so much more. Thank you, Resurrection, for so beautifully hosting the 2026 Annual Gathering!

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES SHORT TERM

Impacting the World for Jesus Christ Through Short Term Missions

655 Phoenix Drive Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
most@mostministries.org 734.994.7909 www.mostministries.org

October 8, 2026

Living Word Lutheran Church
101 E Northridge Ave
Milbank, SD 57252-1501



Dear Friends In Christ,

On behalf of our teams, I want to express my gratitude for your donation of supplies that make it possible for short term missionaries to serve throughout the world. We know it takes time and energy to collect and/or make supplies and then get them sent to MOST Ministries. We appreciate your efforts. Your kindness is more than just a gift - it's a vision of hope for those who have been living in a world out of focus.

While serving in Honduras in August, the picture above shows Pastor Jr. explaining the Gospel using the Witness bracelet. These bracelets are such a simple way to explain the Gospel message with easy to remember colors. Each person coming to the clinic receives a bracelet along with the explanation of each color with the bible verses listed. These are written in their own language so they can learn and share the Good News. Often times they take bracelets for their family and friends that were not able to come to the clinic. The local pastor also prays with the team members and shares how God loves them. MOST Ministries has been blessed by so many wonderful people making Witness Bracelets. We send over 1,000 on each team. Sharing the Gospel is the reason we go!!

Every lens, frame, case, finger puppet or witness bracelet you've contributed helps someone see their loved ones more clearly, read with ease, experience the beauty of the world in a new way or remember the Gospel message that was shared with them at the clinic. Your generosity not only equips our teams with the tools they need but also inspires us to serve with even greater compassion and dedication. You are a vital part of this mission, and the impact of your gift will be felt in every smile, every grateful tear, and every life changed. Thank you for partnering with us to bring the gift of sight to those in need. We are truly blessed to have you as part of our mission family.

Thank You!

Kelly Bone
734-929-1164
Business Manager and Volunteer Coordinator

Mark 16:15 *"He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.'"*

COUNCIL MINUTES



LWLC COUNCIL MEETING REPORT SEPT. 9, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pastor Melanie Reiners, Laurie Maas, Tim DeJong, Sharon Hyde, David Kruger, Kyle Schwandt, Shannon Vietmeier and Julie Berger were present.

Sharon opened with a devotion. David proceeded with prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Tim made a motion to approve the agenda and Julie seconded. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Bibles for the 3 year olds, 3rd graders and 6th graders will be presented at Rally Sunday. Pastor Melanie was pleased that we are blessed to have so many bible studies available to our congregation.

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: October 4 communion assistants are David, Jackie, Shannon and Kyle.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Tim made a motion to approve; Kyle seconded and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCE REPORT: The financial report was reviewed. Shannon made a motion to approve the request from the Impact Committee for $1,000 to help provide a solar panel system that would support the housing for Pastor Sam and also the Cambodian school. Tim seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Julie made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report; seconded by Shannon. Motion carried.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Nothing to report.

WORSHIP & EVANGELISM REPORT: Ongoing work on Time and Talent project.

YOUTH & EDUCATION REPORT: Tim made a motion to approve the request for the LIFT sign for the "shed" for $562.86. Sharon seconded. Motion carried. Julie made a motion to approve the Youth & Education report; there was a second from Kyle. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: Reviewed.

NEW BUSINESS: The office will be closing at 2 p.m. on Friday, September 18 due to WOW gathering in Mankato, MN.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: October 14, at 5:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Newsletter items are due by September 22, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT: Sharon made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by David. The motion carried. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
***Julie Berger**, Council Secretary*

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY** **Daylight Savings Time Ends** 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship/Communion	**2** **Annual Meeting** **Reports Due**	**3**	**4** 3:30 Confirmation 3:30 Dynamic Disciples	**5** 9:00 Community Coffee Fellowship 1:30 Prayer Team meets	**6**	**7**
8 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship 11:00 Chapel Communion	**9**	**10** 9:00 Quilting 1:00 Impact Meeting	**11** **VETERANS DAY** 3:30 Confirmation 3:30 Dynamic Disciples 5:30 Council Meeting	**12** 9:00 Community Coffee Fellowship 1:30 Prayer Team meets	**13**	**14**
15 ANNUAL MEETING 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 9:00 Dec. Servant Team Meets 10:00 Worship 11:00 Annual Meeting	**16**	**17** 9:00 Faith Circle meets 7:00 Love Circle meets	**18** 3:30 Confirmation 3:30 Dynamic Disciples 5:00 LIFT	**19** 9:00 Community Coffee Fellowship 1:30 Prayer Team meets	**20**	**21**
22 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship	**23** **Newsletter Items Due**	**24** 9:00 Quilting	**25** NO Confirmation NO Dynamic Disciples	**26** **THANKSGIVING DAY** Church/Office Closed 	**27** Church/Office Closed	**28**
29 **ADVENT STARTS** 8:45 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship	**30**					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Cailey Sime (b.) TJ Wojahn (b.)	**2**	**3**	**4** Doug Redepenning (b.)	**5**	**6**	**7**
8 Vicki Strege (b.)	**9** Warren Beck (b.)	**10**	**11** David Wagner (b.)	**12**	**13**	**14** Robert & Susan Capp (w.) Robert Capp (b.) Steve Nelson (b.) Brandon Peschong (b.)
15 Terry O'Connor (b.)	**16**	**17** Emma Christensen (b.) Donald Weber (b.)	**18** Mary Hepper (b.) Jay Maze (b.)	**19**	**20** Jacob Berger (b.) Makayla McKinney (b.)	**21** Lane Lindquist (b.)
22	**23** Arnold Rehn (b.)	**24** Bobby & Mary Kinder (w.) Jay & Sally Maze (w.)	**25**	**26** Devon Balling (b.)	**27**	**28**
29	**30** Ben Kasuske (b.) Jessica Weinkauf (b.)					