

# LIVING WORD

## Weekly Update

Monday, March 16, 2020

### Update

Greetings – hope this finds you all well and filled with peace! We will be sending out weekly updates like this to communicate with you any changes or opportunities that arise as we all weather the storm together. As Christians, this situation offers us a wonderful opportunity to witness to the world about the grace, love and healing power of Jesus. We want to give you some updates on the current situation and how it will affect the way we temporarily do church at Living Word. The CDC has now changed their recommendations for gatherings. They have asked that there be NO gatherings of over 50 people. That is a change from 250 just a day ago. Here is the quote from the CDC web page – “...guidance for large events and mass gatherings, recommended that for 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States.” We are trying to keep up with the changing situation with faithfulness and peace and yet, as a church we have an opportunity to be pro-active and to lead. We have been in daily contact with professionals who are on the frontlines of the current situation.

### Community

Here is where we are at today and for the foreseeable future....almost all gatherings such as choirs, Bible studies, fundraising events have already contacted us to let us know they are canceling their events at the church.

- Staff will continue to be in the office during regular office hours: Monday-Thursday 9AM to 4PM, Friday 9AM to 12:00PM. We ask that you call ahead to visit about how best to connect with you during this time.
- There will be no small groups, Bible Studies or activities meeting on location at Living Word.

We have the technology to worship via Live-Stream and will be using that until we get the “all clear” to worship in person again. Here is the direct link to our YouTube page LivingWordMarshallMN <https://www.youtube.com/user/LivingWordMarshallMN>. Services are recorded and available for viewing at a later time at this same link. If you do not have the capability to watch or join us via live stream, we would like to hear from you so we can help get it set up or discuss possible solutions.

- Wednesday Night Lenten Service will be available via live stream at 6:30 PM.
- Sunday Morning Worship Service will be available via live stream at 10:30 AM.
- “Work as Worship” small groups...the small group questions are attached to this email. As part of the live stream the pastors will be walking through the worksheet questions at the conclusion of the teaching video. We encourage you to discuss them at home with your family.
- Other activities that take place at Living Word – The leaders of various activities will be communicating with you in the next couple days about how these activities will function considering the present situation. Look for communications from Jaci Peterson, Greg Pavek, etc. regarding Bible Education, Ignite, Confirmation, 1<sup>st</sup> Communion and any other weekly activities that need to be addressed.
- Bible Studies at Living Word - Look for communications from the respective Bible study leader about how they will either meet or postpone these gatherings.
  - There are ways to be in the Word together, even if we can't meet in person.
  - Zoom, Group calls, Conference calls, etc...We are currently looking into the best options for these types of gatherings. If you are a Bible Study leader and would like input or conversation about how to do this, feel free to call the church office.

We be sending updates out via email at least weekly. Please look for them, read them and share the information with others, especially if there is somebody you know that doesn't have access to electronic communications.

## **Pastoral Care/ Prayer**

- If you or somebody you know is in need of physical, emotional or spiritual support please reach out to us.
- Part of our response as Christians is to walk through this together with grace, love, confidence and faith. We are here for you.
- As a staff, along with input from various professionals on the front-lines, we are looking into how Living Word can serve the community. There have been a lot of ideas put forth. We will see how things unfold and let you know how we, as a church, can respond in powerful and unique ways to serve the community.
- You may not know this, but Living Word is under contract to be an emergency response site! If there is the need, Living Word will be set up as an emergency response station. There may be a number of ways the building could be used such as a pill dispensary or a facility set up to care for people, etc.
- We want to pray for you. Please reach out to us with prayer requests! Email us or submit a prayer request via the prayer ministry link on our website <https://www.livingwordmarshall.org/prayer-ministry/> .
- If you'd like us to mail you a "Our Daily Bread" daily devotional booklet, please let us know.
- Now is a great time to spend additional time studying God's Word, watching online Bible studies, etc. Our website has a link to numerous ministry resources including free access to Right Now Media, Bible reading plans, etc. <https://www.livingwordmarshall.org/resources/>

## **Encouragement**

Isaiah 6:1 "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple." Look in your Bible. What is the heading for this chapter of Isaiah? Mine says; "Isaiah's Commission." This is Isaiah's account of how the Lord called him to be a prophet to his people. Two important things jump out right away - first, we know the time frame and the situation that Isaiah's call happened during. It was in the year the King Uzziah died. King Uzziah had reigned for 52 years!! He was a godly man and a good king. Under Uzziah's leadership the people of God, the kingdom of Judah, had flourished. In fact, not since the reign of Solomon did the Kingdom have the sort of success and power that it achieved under Uzziah's reign. But, that didn't mean everything was rosy in the land...the truth is that even though the king was by most standards a good king things started happening during Uzziah's reign. 52 years of relative prosperity and power brought about, as you might expect during prosperity, a falling away from God. People didn't think they needed the Lord – they were fine! Sound familiar? Anyway, there is a lot to the story, but the first thing we can glean from the story is that Isaiah was called during a period of great change, a time of uncertainty and doubt about what the future held. How about that...does that sound familiar? The second and most important things that we find in verse 1 of Isaiah chapter 6 is a word that all of us need today. That is this – in the middle of great change, or upheaval, God is STILL ON THE THRONE! God sees, knows and understands all that is taking place. God is active and moving. As Christians, in the midst of whatever Covid-19 brings we must be grounded by, constantly remembering and guided in our actions by this truth – GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE! Isaiah 6 is the "call of Isaiah." Read further – and you will see in vs 8 this interaction between the Lord and Isaiah "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying; "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said "Here I am. Send Me!" Now is our time. God is calling us as Christians to turn to Him. He is calling us to stand firm in faith. He is calling us to rely on Him, trust Him and walk in His ways. As Christians, like Isaiah, we can respond in the current situation "Here I am send me!" That is the mindset of the pastors and staff here at Living Word. We invite you to respond along with us "Here I am send me!"

## **How to Reach or Connect With Us**

Church Office 507-337-9673

Pastor Kelly 507-828-3434

Pastor Dave 320-583-3647

Intern Pastor Greg 507-621-1817

Office Email [livingword@livingwordmarshall.org](mailto:livingword@livingwordmarshall.org)

Website: [www.livingwordmarshall.org](http://www.livingwordmarshall.org)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LivingWordMarshallMN>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LivingWordMarshall/>

***God's Peace,  
Living Word Pastors, Staff & Leadership***

