

# LIVING WORD

## Weekly Update

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

### Update

We hope and pray that this communication finds you well amid the concern and chaos of the current situation. We all have thoughts and opinions about how we should respond personally and as a community/nation to the Covid-19 virus. I hear people on both sides of the issues. Those annoyed and angered by people out in public who choose NOT to wear a mask, or who aren't respecting boundaries. On the other side – people who are angry with the stay at home order and want us all to return to normal life as soon as possible! I think most people fall somewhere in the middle – wanting to honor the order but wondering how long this is going to last? For our part, Living Word will continue to honor the Governors order as we have lots of conversation around the next phase of ministry. When we hear more clarification on what is planned after May 4<sup>th</sup> for gatherings, numbers and space restrictions, we will be prepared to meet the orders with creativity and faithfulness. Please give us grace in this process. We are trying to make the best decisions that we can in lieu of the current circumstances.

Until things change – we will be worshipping as we have these past weeks, by live-streaming our services. We are aware that this is not ideal, but we have heard from many of you that you have felt blessed by the services despite the strangeness of it all. Thank you for the feedback and encouragement. You may have heard in the announcements from this past Sunday that May 7<sup>th</sup> has been declared a National Day of Prayer. Considering this, we will be worshipping on Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM. It will be a worship service of prayer and praise. This too will be live-streamed and can be accessed in the same way that you would access our Sunday Morning services as detailed below. We hope you will join us. If you are unable to join us for the worship service, stop at various points in your day and pray. Pray for our world, nation, community and church. Pray that God uses this time in our lives to strengthen our faith and restore our relationship with Him and with one another. We will put out more details on this event in next week's communication.

You may be seeing the Living Word church bus around town! It isn't just because it needs to be fired up and driven from time to time. It's because we are going to spend some time praying over businesses, farmers and families! We will be driving into parking lots and driveways praying for God's hand of healing, hope, provision, encouragement, life and joy to be poured out. If you see the bus drive by, lift up your own prayers and know that we are with you!

Finally, don't forget to get your home communion supply ready for Sunday morning. We will be doing "virtual communion" with you. If you remember or joined us for Maundy Thursday it will be done much like that this Sunday morning. If you didn't get a chance to join us then, and don't know what this is all about. Basically, you will be providing your own wine/grape juice and bread/crackers and we will take time during the service to share communion together. Through it, we will be reminded once again how God knits us together by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are looking forward to it!

### Community

- Gatherings: There will be no small groups, Bible Studies or activities meeting on location at Living Word until we are given the all clear to gather in person and in groups.
- Sunday Worship Services at 10:30AM: Sunday Worship Services will continue to be available via live stream at 10:30 AM on our YouTube channel LivingWordMarshallMN. [www.youtube.com/user/LivingWordMarshallMN](http://www.youtube.com/user/LivingWordMarshallMN)
  - You can either join us live for these services or watch them with your family at a later time.
  - Subscribe and sign up for notifications to our LivingWordMarshallMN YouTube channel to receive a notification whenever we go live or add a new video. Also, going to "Playlist" when you get to our channel will make it easier to find the video you're looking for.
- Sunday Worship Service Replays: Marshall Studio 1 TV (Charter channel 180, Vast channel 17) at 11:00AM Tuesday and 5:00PM Wednesday; Cottonwood Access TV (Charter/Spectrum channel 180) at 7:00 PM Monday

- “2 Minute Faith Break” Videos: Shared on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday via email, Facebook & YouTube.
- Community Life Groups: Active members and active non-members have been assigned to a Community Life Group consisting of about 10 households. We’ve asked one person in each of those groups to connect with the others. Please let us know if you don’t hear from somebody or would like to be added to a group. This will help us all stay connected, check in with every member, receive prayer requests and answer questions.
- Children & Youth: Greg Pavek or Jaci Peterson will be connecting with you each week regarding Bible Education, Ignite and Confirmation via email, text, Zoom, etc. This information has also been added to the Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry areas on the website.
- Young Adult Online Bible Study (hosted by Greg Pavek): Gather online via Zoom on Tuesday evenings at 7:00PM. Please contact Greg if you have questions. Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/784884197>.
- Wednesday Evening Online Bible Study “Overcoming Anxiety During COVID-19” by Jonathan Pokluda (hosted by Pastor Kelly): Gather online via Zoom on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. The study speaks words of comfort and wisdom, to help Christians navigate the areas of life COVID-19 is affecting. During this series you’ll be encouraged in how to overcome anxiety in these troubling days and explore ways you can remain faithful to God and to others. Please contact Pastor Kelly with questions.  
Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/2698640500?pwd=SHg1Wm5HRmszSmZEWTVZaVRnUCtadz09>  
Meeting ID: 269 864 0500, Password: 325350
- Thursday Morning Online Men’s Bible Study: Gather online via Zoom on Thursdays at 6:30AM. All men are welcome to join the call to read and study scripture together. Please contact Pastor Dave with questions.  
Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/2698640500?pwd=SHg1Wm5HRmszSmZEWTVZaVRnUCtadz09>  
Meeting ID: 269 864 0500, Password: 325350
- LWLC Women’s Bible Study – “Philippians”: Begins Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Attention ladies! You are invited to be a part of a 40-day online interactive Bible Study via a Facebook group called. As we walk through this unknown time, unable to meet face to face, we can still be a community that learns and grows together. We will walk through the book of Philippians together by taking a close look at Paul’s letter and dig deep into scripture, one chapter at a time. When Paul wrote this book, he was in prison (house arrest) and dealing with hardships, just like many of us are dealing with right now, and Paul still found joy, hope, and peace in his circumstances. Join us as we slowly work through each chapter and dissect the scriptures to more fully understand God’s Word together. We encourage you to invite the women in your life to join you in this study, too! Please contact Patty Ebnet if you have questions: (507) 829-0815, [pjebnet95@charter.net](mailto:pjebnet95@charter.net) or join the Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/235732441118878/?ref=share>
- Weekly Updates: We be sending updates like this via email at least weekly. Please look for them, read them and share the information with others.
- “Joy in Motion Christian Exercise”: Living Word member, Erin Koch, has posted her exercise videos with scripture meditation and other interesting information on her website [www.joyinmotion.net](http://www.joyinmotion.net)

### **Pastoral Care/ Prayer**

- If you or somebody you know needs physical, emotional or spiritual support please reach out to us.
- Please reach out to us with prayer requests! We want to pray with and for you. Email or call us or submit a prayer request via the prayer ministry link on our website <https://www.livingwordmarshall.org/prayer-ministry/>.
- “Our Daily Bread” daily devotional booklet - Please let us know if you’d like us to mail one to you.
- RightNow Media & other ministry resources - Now is a great time to spend additional time studying God’s Word, watching online Bible studies, etc. Our website has a link to register for a free RNM account and numerous other ministry resources, Bible reading plans, etc. <https://www.livingwordmarshall.org/resources/>
- We invite you to join in a nationwide call to prayer from 8:00-8:01PM daily.

## Encouragement/Devotion

### Jeremiah 29:10-14

**10 This is what the LORD says: “You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. 12 In those days when you pray, I will listen. 13 If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. 14 I will be found by you,” says the LORD. “I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land.”**

The prophet Jeremiah had a difficult task. He brought words of rebuke and warning to the people of God. He spoke words of judgement and exile. I can't imagine that he was excited to speak these prophecies to the people. I'm sure it grieved his heart and caused him great pain. He is sometimes called the “weeping prophet” for good reason! Along with the difficult task of speaking God's judgement, he would also endure the same sentence that he spoke to the people. His ministry lasted 40 years and it was fraught with hardship and persecution. Even his own relatives would conspire against him and betray him. God's calling on his life did not mean ease and comfort. It meant that no matter what he experienced God was with him, guiding him and directing him. Jeremiah knew he HAD to speak the message God had given him. He wrote how, if he tried to resist speaking what God told him to speak or tried to not even mention God's name, God's words became like fire in his heart. He was unable to hold them in (Jeremiah 20:9). “But if I say I'll never mention the Lord or speak in his name, his word burns in my heart like a fire. It's like a fire in my bones! I am worn out trying to hold it in! I can't do it!” Thankfully, God moved Jeremiah in this way because the Word that God called him to speak was more than judgement and exile, it was also restoration, renewal and hope! We hear the beautiful words of hope in Jeremiah 29. I know many of you know the words of Jeremiah 29:11, some of you even have this verse memorized! The question before us today is this; do you believe it?

It's an easy word to love during good times. It's an easy message to embrace during minor struggles of life, but what about now? In the middle of deep nation-wide, world-wide, issues...do we still claim it? Can we still trust it and believe that God is for us? It is now more than ever that we must look to the Lord. Speak the Lord's words of comfort and promise! We must cling to these words just as God's people did during their 70 years of exile when Jeremiah was speaking on behalf of the Lord.

How long will this last? What does the future hold? When will life be normal? I don't know. I do know God is good. He loves us. The ultimate victory has already been won. It's my prayer that during this time God plants His Word SO deeply inside each of us that like Jeremiah it becomes like a fire in our bones! I pray that it warms us, fills us, fuels us and guides us towards His love and grace! I pray that His Word moves us to love boldly and speak the Lord's promises to people who feel lost or who are despairing. I pray and trust that we will live to see God restore and renew our nation and heal our land. I pray that we will together hold fast to God's promises to never leave us nor forsake us, because that is a fact. It is who God is – faithful and true! Look for Him with all your heart! You WILL find him, even now. That is a promise! Don't just take my word for it, read Jeremiah 29:10-14 again.

In Christ,  
Pastor Dave Christensen

**How to Reach or Connect with Us** - Please contact staff via email or cell phone listed below:

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