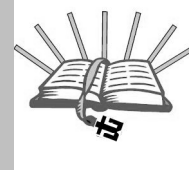


# LIVING WORDS



JULY NEWSLETTER

June 23, 2011  
Volume 6, Issue 7

Living Word Lutheran Church  
Website: [www.livingwordlc.org](http://www.livingwordlc.org)

11974 Walker Street, Arlington, TN 38002

Phone: 901-377-1010  
E-mail: [livingwordLC@bellsouth.net](mailto:livingwordLC@bellsouth.net)

*“And God rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.”* Genesis 2: 2

“The summer is supposed to be a time of rest.” Pastor Andrea and I have probably said this to one another a million times already this summer. The summer is when Pastor Andrea and I would often find time to personally catch up on all the things that were put off because of busy schedules. However, this summer has proved to be an exceptionally busy one....and for good reason. This summer we at Living Word are busy working on building plans as we move forward with Living Word’s new church building... thanks be to God! In addition, Living Word is also sending five youth to Lutherock for the first time, which we are leading them forth. Both activities are exciting and glorious above and beyond our normal pastoral duties and we are truly blessed to be a part of them. However, it did get us thinking about the age old debate that God gives to you only what you can handle. I am sure many of us have felt this before, if not this summer, then at least at some point this past year.

In light of God giving us only what we can handle, we recently read an article from a new interactive Lutheran website called [livinglutheran.com](http://livinglutheran.com). On this website there are blogs and articles from many other Lutherans voices out there. The article we would like to share is by Paul Lutter, a visiting instructor at Gustavus Adolphus College. He is working toward his Ph.D. from Luther Seminary and we hope you enjoy his words about how God gives. Our prayer for all is that God may grant you peace and comfort during these summer months. If you are traveling, may God grant you safe travels. If you are seeking rest this summer, may God grant you a blessed time of Sabbath rest. If you are not planning to do anything different this summer, may God grant you continued blessings in all that you do. In Christ’s love, *Pastor Jason Peterson and Pastor Andrea Windsor-Peterson*

## HOW GOD GIVES: GRACE ALONE

By Paul Lutter

When it comes to how God relates to us, how God gives to us, we have something of a problem on our hands.

It seems more than obvious to point out that we live in a world filled with conditions, limits and expiration dates.

We are used to being told to act now, to study hard, to exercise at least 30 minutes a day, to drive the speed limit, or else we will miss out on the deal, won’t do very well in school, will have health problems, or will be in danger of receiving a speeding ticket.

These are not bad things, not at all.

The reality is this: In the conditional world in which we live, we come to believe that we can add to — or take away from — our lives.

While not problematic in and of itself, the real troubles come when we think we can add to — or take away from — how God relates to us.

We try hard to put conditions on how God loves, forgives and saves us.

This kind of thinking was not foreign to Luther as he grew up.

Pastors' Article continues here:

### **Teachings of the time**

Living under the popular medieval theological idea that each person is to “do what is in one” (*facere quod in se est*), Luther was taught that God’s gifts were boarded up and unleashed only after a person did everything in their power. Then, and only then, would God “do the rest” by giving people what is promised.

Some use the image of a staircase to identify how God conditionally relates to God’s people.

God stands on the top step; people stand on the bottom. By doing what is in them, people are able to ascend the steps to God. When they sin, or don’t somehow do all that they can, they either stand still or descend the staircase away from God.

The image suggests that in our relationship with God we are engaged in nothing more or less than divine step aerobics.

The result of such “exercising” is that people are in terror about whether they have, indeed, done “what is in (them)” so that God, by God’s grace, can complete what we’ve begun.

This was certainly true for Luther. Completely terrified by the possibility that he hadn’t “done what was in (him),” Luther spent hours on end in the confessional describing the ways that he had fallen short. By so doing, he was hoping that then he would know the fullness of God’s forgiveness and love.

What Luther found at the end of the day, though, was not that he was wrapped in what God gives by “doing what was in (him).”

The only thing Luther gained from doing all he had done was pure exhaustion and further terror from all of the divine step aerobics.

### **New understanding**

Luther discovered something that rocked his medieval worldview, and changed the way he — and we — understand how God gives to us. Luther realized that God doesn’t wait for us to do our part before God does what God promises to do for us.

Fully, Luther came to understand, God forgives, loves and saves us completely apart from anything we do or do not do. When this came to light, it was for Luther as if “the gates of heaven were opened to me.”

Such news clangs in our ears, however.

“I have to do something,” we retort. “God isn’t going to do God’s thing with or for us without our first believing, right?”

Pastors' Article continues here:

When faith — or anything else God gives — is turned from a gift God gives to something we need to do first to earn God's favor, we reveal something rather telling about ourselves.

We do not trust that God gives as God promises.

We do not trust God.

This is the very definition of the confession, "(We) are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves."

We actually like doing divine step aerobics, thank you very much.

We would rather live in the terror of the law than the grace of the gospel.

Yet God will not have it. God's gifts are neither something for which we barter nor prizes which we have earned.

### **Abundant gifts**

For when God gives — and God does give, wholly and completely — we, like Jonah, "come to (ourselves)." We are left awestruck.

Dumbfounded. Surprised.

Where and when we want to hop back on the staircase to do our recommended daily allowances of divine step aerobics, God is the one who makes a move.

God comes down the staircase, gifts in hand, ready to dole them out to us who are caught empty-handed.

When God reaches us, God hands them out, as the one who sews seeds.

God throws caution to the wind and hands out God's gifts with wild abandon. Foolishly. Freely. For us.

When we speak of grace alone, we mean to say something unconditional about the way God gives to us who are not ready and yet waiting for God's presence and work among us.

God gives. We receive. Fully and completely.

In this there is hope.

**“Celebrate the Joyful WORSHIP of Christ regularly”**...and bring others with you to share ‘the joy’  
—expanded from the “Principals We Live by Mission Purpose of LWLC.

*Sometimes I should sing with my spirit, and at other times I should sing with my mind. -1 Corinthians  
14:15b*

This passage from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians is a worship aid. The worshiper needs to know that hymns grow out of individual and corporate experiences. Great hymn writers have experienced the faith and are eager to pass it on.

It is my hope to aid worshipers in understanding the faith through hymnody so they can accept the challenge of Paul to sing with spirit and understanding.

Sunday, July third, we will include patriotic hymns in our worship. Some of our brass players will play patriotic music. Here follows some background information on two of our patriotic hymns.

**BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC** sung to the tune Battle Hymn:

Text is by Julia Ward Howe (1819 – 1910) who heard Union troops singing “John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave,” a song about a farmer hanged for his fight against slavery. Desiring to set better words to the tune she wrote this text in 1862 upon awaking early in a Washington, DC hotel. It is one of the most powerful of all calls for a nation to purge itself under the judgment of God and to march to the beat of the drums of God. The tune, in existence long before the Civil War, has been used with a variety of texts by infantrymen, by firemen, and in revival meetings. This tune seems to be of unknown origin.

**O BEAUTIFUL FOR SPACIOUS SKIES** Sung to the tune Materna

Sometimes a hymn is born in a moment of inspiration and never changed, but Katharine Lee Bates’ (1859 – 1929) original poem, written after climbing Pikes Peak and gazing across the plains to the east, was altered twice by her --- in 1904 and finally in 1918. The “alabaster cities” of stanza three refers to the “White City” of the Columbian World Exposition at Chicago which she visited on the way to Colorado. Its patriotic fervor has made the hymn a “second” national anthem. The tune was composed by Samuel A Ward.

*God Bless our native land; firm may it ever stand through storm and night. When the wild tempests rage, ruler of wind and wave, do thou our country save by thy great might. – from God Bless Our Native Land*

Wendell Baechler  
Organist

**LIVING WORD CHOIR is on hiatus until further notice!**

We are pleased to announce our new Church Council:

President	Travis Fowler
Vice President	Martha Menser
Treasurer	Marian Gray
Secretary	Jennie Neiswinger
Council Members	Ron Abbott
	Michelle Spitler



Liaisons:

Education	Jennie Neiswinger
Fellowship	Martha Menser
Finance	Marian Gray
Outreach	Michelle Spitler
Property	Travis Fowler
Worship	Pastor Jason and Pastor Andrea
Youth	Ron Abbott

We offer them our congratulations and pray for them as they go about the business and ministries of our church.



The Youth would like to thank everyone who has supported them in their efforts to raise the money to participate in the Lutherock experience in July.

Godspeed and safe travels to our youth. Keep them and their leaders in your prayers.

*Arianna Doyle, Jonathan Fowler, Sam Moody, Thomas Moody and Hunter Spitler*

*A note of Thanks from Sandy Long for the cards and prayers. "It has truly helped a lot."*

## July Birthdays

1	Erek Majkrzak	18	Sandy Stephens
5	Angela Gwyn	22	Ford Cornett
7	Alan Chapman	23	Maggie Beckman
10	Evelyn Woods	24	Lee Buchschacher
13	Paula Abbott	25	Justin Spitler
13	Sam Moody	28	Betty Barnes
13	Robin Abbott	30	Robert Moody

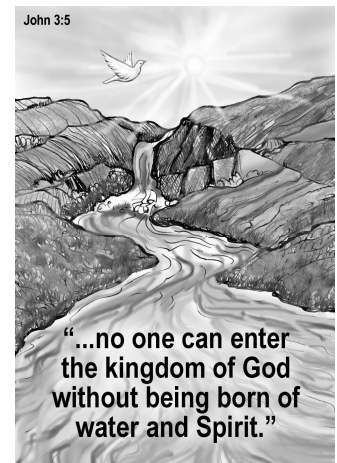


## July Anniversaries

- 2 - Norm and Carolyn Moody
- 11 - Alex and Susan Buchschacher

## July Baptisms

1	Melissa Buchschacher	22	Pastor Andrea
2	Timothy Peterson	30	Sam Moody
6	James Cornett	31	Alan Chapman
6	Sandy Long	31	Samuel Chapman
15	Evelyn Woods	31	Andrew Frazier





**LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**11974 Walker Street  
Arlington, TN 38002**

**Phone:**  
901-377-1010

**E-Mail: [livingwordLC@bellsouth.net](mailto:livingwordLC@bellsouth.net)**

---

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

Web site address

---

[www.livingwordlc.org](http://www.livingwordlc.org)

---

---

Living Word Lutheran Church  
11974 Walker Street  
Arlington, TN 38002

**LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH'S  
Mission and Purpose  
Living the Word...Spreading the Word.**

**Worshiping**

Celebrate the joyful worship of Christ Regularly

**Praying**

Pray daily for one another and for the community

**Sharing**

Be a light in the community by sharing our bounty

**Proclaiming**

Proclaim Living Word of Jesus Christ in Word and Deed

**Studying**

Grow in Faith and Knowledge in Study of the Bible

**Welcoming**

Welcome with love and acceptance ALL people