

Serving God

Through faith, we live to serve God rather than ourselves. We acknowledge that God has created and redeemed us and that He is in control. Our joy and peace come from worshiping and serving Him. We understand that our purpose in life is to serve our heavenly Father. In contrast, people of the world live to serve themselves. Unfortunately, we live in a "me" era. Our society promotes a selfish and egotistical attitude. Our culture tells us to make every effort "to look out for number one" at any cost. "Have it **your** way" is a phrase that captures the philosophy of life in America. Money, selfish ambition, power, and success are the important things in life to most people.

In our faithful service for others, we are serving the Lord. Jesus said, *"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of My brothers, you did it to Me"* (Matthew 25:40). When we help others and extend God's kingdom, we become channels through which He works. We are His hands, feet, and mouth.

We become faithful and dependable workers because *"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and goodness ... "* (2 Peter 1:3). God has equipped us to do His will. Paul wrote, *"I can do everything through Him Who strengthens me"* (Philippians 4: 13).

God has made us for the purpose of doing good and serving others. In writing to the church in Galatia Paul exhorted, *"Let us not grow weary of doing good"* (Galatians 6:9). Whether we are working in the church, volunteering in our communities, or helping others, when we toil in the strength of the Lord, we are not to grow weary. *"[God] gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might He increases strength ... They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not be weary ... "* (Isaiah 40:29,31).

God gives us both strength to do good and joy in our service. Solomon tells us, *"Whoever brings blessings will be enriched"* (Proverbs 11:25). Volunteer efforts, charitable acts, generosity of spirit, and gestures of compassion all enrich and sustain our lives."

How wonderful is our Savior who has not only set the example but continues to enable us in the out pouring of these gifts. As we are reaching the end of the "lazy days of summer" now is the time for all of us to review and re-evaluate our lives in relationship to the Savior and His church.

To maintain our faith in the serving of our Savior, we again this fall will offer opportunities for service—worship, bible study, serving in our Sunday school, attending a TLC group or the LWML monthly meetings among others. Consider increasing what you do for the Savior who has done so much for you.

I pray that you enjoy what's left of your summer. May the Lord bless your leisure and your work, especially your work for Him.

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Nowak

September 2022 Messenger Deadline:

Monday, August 22nd, 2022

No Late Articles

Please submit articles by this date.

Email to: mlc-ms@hotmail.com OR
leave a copy in the office.



LWML Gathering will be on August 11th, at 9 am. The Bible study will be **Hope Abounds** from the summer messenger. We will work on mission bracelets and plan for our next project. Copies of the Bible study will be on the table in the narthex.

Choirs to Resume?

It has been nearly a choir-free two-year stretch. If you've been a choir member in the past, you'll be receiving an email from me (Corey) to get a discussion going about how we'd like to proceed for the upcoming year. I'm guessing it will look at least somewhat different than it has in past years.



For those of you who are newer to Monona, we always look forward to new members! We have two choirs: a vocal choir of about 8-10 members; a bell choir (both hand-bells and hand-chimes) of about 8 or 9 people and really could use more! Reading music or past choir experience aren't requirements for either choir. If you are interested, please see me after church and maybe we can find a good fit for you!



Corey

Get Ready, Get Set for Sunday School

Sunday School will start on September 11th. And runs from 10:15 a.m. until 11:15 a.m. Please have your children invite their friends for the start of Sunday School. Registration Sheets for children attending Sunday School will be on the sign-up table after August 6th. Please call Ann Rubin at 608/335-7665 or Judy Thompson at 608/239-2402, if you have any questions.



Prayer Chain

Life presents challenges to all of us, but sometimes those challenges can feel like *it's* just too much. If you are experiencing situations, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual, call our Prayer chain. You may give your prayer requests to Angie TerMaat at 608-246-9608, Susan Bartlett at 608-437-5765, or the church office at 222-7071 or call if you would like to become a part of our Prayer chain.

**“Hear my prayer, O Lord;
listen to my cry for mercy.”**

Plan now to attend the **Fall Retreat** on Friday, September 23rd and Saturday the 24th, at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center in Fond du Lac. The theme this year is **“Spiritual Gifts”** based on *Philippians 4:13*. The retreat speaker will be Karol Selle, educator, editor and graphic design editor. The Gifts from the Heart will benefit the Fondy Food Pantry. Items to be gathered include: Laundry detergent (powder or liquid), canned fruit, peanut butter, non-sugared cereal and oatmeal. Registration forms are available on the LWML-SWD web page or in the Welcoming Area. Deadline for reservation is August 26th.

Christmas in July/August: Thank you to those who took a Christmas box to fill for Orphan Grain Train. The returned boxes can be put on top of the table by the Sunday school rooms or in the box underneath. Please **Do Not** seal them. Ann will take care of that part. If you have any questions, please call Ann's cell.



Pop Tab Collection: Don't forget we are still collecting pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. Just put them in the container on the counter of the Welcoming Area. **RMHC** collects pull tabs for two reasons:

1. Pull tabs have significant value in the recycling industry as they represent the purest form of aluminum.
2. RMHC does not have the storage space to collect cans.



Steward Builders

A newsletter to help you grow as a steward.

The purpose of this newsletter is to share God's Word so that our members will better understand who we are to be and what we are to do in the light of the Scriptures. It is our hope that this monthly publication will help you grow in your relationship with the Lord and as a Christian steward.

Giving God our First Priority

Have you ever worked and worked to see very little result from your big efforts? In the Old Testament book of Haggai, the work of God's people was producing no fruit. They toiled in the fields, but there was no harvest. God was upset with them so he made their efforts fruitless. Because their priorities were focused only on themselves rather than God, God "*called for a drought on the fields and the mountains*" (Haggai 1:11). He even "*blew away*" (verse 9) what they had brought home.



The reason for God's wrath was expressed in verse 4: "*Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?*" God had finally had enough of their self-centeredness. His priorities were not His people's priorities. He got their attention by making life difficult for them.

God's people responded. They "*obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai*" (vs. 12). God's priorities became the priorities of the people. In the same way the people in the time of Haggai examined and changed their priorities, we need to make sure that we are putting God's priorities for our lives first. Our focus can't be on building bigger and better homes or larger retirement accounts for ourselves. God is calling us to make a difference in people's lives. We need to ask God what He wants to accomplish through us.

On the Lighter Side

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of the minister in line at the service station. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. "Reverend," said the young man, "sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip." The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

A Sunday school teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?" A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" answered the kindergarten boy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked. "You know—Our Father, who does art in Heaven . . ."

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humor out of life,
And pass it on to other folk! Amen.

A Month's Wages

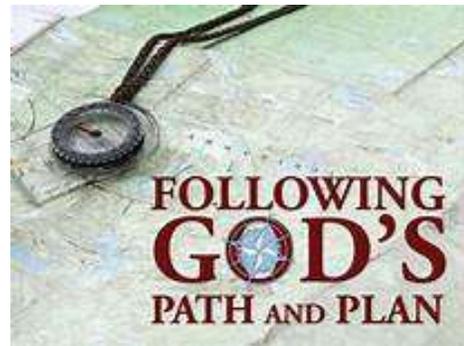
The Reverend J. Ross Stevenson, when pastor of the Fifth Avenue Church, New York City, received a letter enclosing a month's wages from a Swedish servant girl, just before the annual offering for foreign missions was to be taken. She wrote that she had been making the offering a subject of special prayer and it had been put into heart to give this sum. Lest Satan should tempt her not to give so much, if she waited until Sunday, she sent it at once. When the pastor read the note from the pulpit, there was a profound silence, and the offering that day was doubled by the example of one girl's sacrifice.

Two men who had come over from New Jersey for that service walked down the avenue afterward together without either saying a word for some distance. One asked the other whether he could lend him some money to get home; then his friend confessed that he, too, had put into the offering every cent he had with him. Both were obliged to walk to the ferry and find a good Samaritan in Jersey City to assist them to get home. (Author Unknown)

Choosing Our Path

God wants us to follow Him, but He gives us the freedom to choose what path we will take and whom we will serve. As we stand at the crossroads of life, God continually reaches out to us through His Word. In Jeremiah 6:16 we read, *"This is what the Lord says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.'"* Daily we are at the crossroads of life. The choice we make is our own. As Yogi Berra said, "When you get to a fork in the road, take it." The road we take will have eternal consequences.

Will we choose God's way or the ways of the world? With God's help, our answer can be like Joshua's: *"But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord"* (Joshua 24:15).



Joshua's choice was that he and his family would be servants and stewards of the Lord. When you reach crossroads in life, you will hear God's call, "Follow Me," but the call to serve yourself and the ways of the world will be loud and boisterous. If you don't reject God's call and you follow, as Jeremiah did, the ancient paths, you will turn away from your self-interests and focus on ways to serve the Lord. Your lifestyle will reflect and deepen your relationship with Him. As followers of Jesus, we acknowledge God's ownership and love. We become stewards of what He entrusts to us. As followers of the Lord, we see others as brothers and sisters in Christ. We live with an eternal perspective.

Blessings on your Stewardship Journey!

Next Life Foundation

Hope Being Realized

In 2016 the first tailoring students began their journey with Next Life Foundation and God's big vision through NLF for the young people and mamas in Mbuguni. This primarily Muslim and poverty stricken village in northern Tanzania is home to people trapped in a life of little hope of improving their situation.

Next Life Foundation's goal has always been to provide a vocational skill that will provide a future income for our graduates and also more importantly bring them a hope in Jesus Christ. Due to the Islamic influence in the area sharing Christ must be done in a gentle but consistent manner. As the reputation of the school has grown, so has the sharing of Christ. The Christian worship has become an important part of the school day. "Morning Glory" and "Evening Glory" begin and end each school day. These are times for the students to pray, sing praises and hear our carpentry instructor, Mr. Reonald, read and speak from the Bible. The May mission team had the opportunity to share in this special time Thursday afternoon. The Holy Spirit was definitely in that place. It was a joy to see that all of our Muslim students chose to stay and participate. There is also a weekly time of devotions each Friday. This is an extended time of worship where Pastor Elia, a local pastor, comes to lead the worship time. (Go to www.NextLifeFound.org to see a video clip of this worship time-bottom of page.) God's goodness was and is overwhelming no matter our circumstances.

Save the Date

Mark your calendar for the Next Life Foundation Annual Banquet. Thursday, September 22nd at the Maser Monarch Lodge, Okoboji, IA.

To see Next Life Foundation's current flyer, check out their website or the flyer that is posted on the office window.

Healing Service:

The next Healing Service will take place on *Sunday, August 14th*, following the service. If you have a burden or sickness that you would like to commend to the Lord, this would be a great time to do so. Copies of the service can be found on the table in the narthex.

CELEBRATING

BIRTHDAYS IN AUGUST

<i>Tom Neuser</i>	<i>2nd</i>
<i>Sharon Knapp</i>	<i>3rd</i>
<i>Tami Noll</i>	<i>4th</i>
<i>Steve Neuser</i>	<i>5th</i>
<i>Stacy Kummerow</i>	<i>10th</i>
<i>Tyre Ampe</i>	<i>24th</i>
<i>Steve Peck</i>	<i>25th</i>
<i>Karen Bartlett</i>	<i>26th</i>
<i>Elliot King</i>	<i>29th</i>



ANNIVERSARIES IN AUGUST

Dr. Arnold & Judie Krubsack—60 years, 25th
Neil & Susie Bartlett—45 years, 27th



**CONGRATULATIONS and
GOD'S BLESSINGS TO ALL**

St Stephen's Food Pantry: Please remember about the little red wagon in the Welcoming Area for St. Stephen's Food Pantry. There is always a need for food pantry items, any time of the year. Donations of food, personal items, paper products, baby food and diapers are all gratefully received. Next time you're out shopping add a couple of things to your cart for the pantry.



Blood Drive:

Monday, July 11, Monona Grove High School sponsored a blood drive at our church. Rebecca is a student at MGHS and member of HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America). She was able to recruit donors for a total of 23 donations. Four people were deferred that day as well. Thank you Monona Lutheran Church for your support in her effort.

The next drive will be on Monday, September 12th from 1 to 6 pm at Alliance@4200. Lake Edge UCC will be the sponsor. If you would like to donate, please contact Ann Rubin.



MONONA MESSENGER
Monona Ev. Lutheran Church, LC-MS
4411 Monona Dr.
Monona, WI 53716

Address Service Requested



Divine Worship

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Monday Evening 6:30 p.m. (Not at present time)

Communion Services

1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

Midweek Lenten & Advent

Vespers 6:30 p.m.

NO Monday Worship on Legal Holidays

Sunday Christian Education Hour

Adult Bible Classes 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:15 am Sept. - May

Pastor: Rev. Thomas Nowak

Office Phone: 608.222.7071

E-mail: mlc-ms@hotmail.com

Website: www.mononalutheran.org

Stewardship Thought

Handle with Care

We've all received fragile items in boxes that are marked "Handle with Care." In some ways, the gifts we receive as stewards from God should be marked with the words "Handle with Care." Shouldn't we handle our blessings such as abilities, money, time, physical health, and relationships with utmost care? In essence, we are handling with care the blessings God entrusts to us when we are faithful and responsible with them. Realizing that all of life is a gift helps us to receive with gratitude and to handle our blessings with care and thankfulness.



Prayer: *Dear good and gracious Heavenly Father, thank You for all my blessings. Help me to receive them with thanksgiving and equip me to use them to Your glory. Amen.*

Blessings on your journey as a steward!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

"Loving Christ, Serving Others through Preaching, Teaching, Reaching"