



MONONA MESSENGER

JUNE 2025

+ God's Draft Choices +

Two of the most highly watched sporting events on television this past spring were not when teams or athletes are competing against each other; rather they involve the drafting of players for the National Football League (NFL) and National Basketball Association (NBA) teams. For many hours, fans of professional sports will watch intently to see whom their favorite teams will draft.

Most of us won't be drafted by professional football or basketball teams, but, as Christians, we receive a greater calling. We, in essence, are God's draft choices. "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit" (John 15:16). God has made us a part of His team. We are not chosen by God because we are successful in our careers, great athletes, or wealthy. God chooses ordinary people to do extra-ordinary things. "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are " (1 Corinthians 1:27-28).

Through faith, we understand that we are among the foolish and weak through whom God carries on his life-saving work. "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this allsurpassing power is from God and not from us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). God entrusts us—clay jars—with this treasure—the Gospel. Even though we are frail and unworthy of our tasks, God has chosen us to carry His message of love to the world. As humble people of faith, we are empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He transforms and molds us. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is God Who does the drafting and the changing. Through faith, we will stay on God's team, and we will bear the fruit that He calls us to bear.

The professional athletes who are drafted are expected to perform. They are paid large sums of money to do very athletic things. As God's chosen people, we may not receive large compensation, but our benefits are out of this world! Therefore, we are eager to use our lives and resources in God's service for His glory. Paul wrote, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2: 10). What a privilege it is to be part of and serving on God's winning team!

Building the Harvest with You,
Pastor Nowak

Celebrating Birthdays in June



1 Joy Hamburg
12 Judy Thompson
18 Jeanne Nowak
18 Jasper Rutherford
23 Dale Thur
23 Alyssa Simon
26 Aleah Noll

Celebrating Anniversaries in June

1 John & Anna McNeil - 62 years
1 Rev. Thomas & Jeanne Nowak-40 years
4 Mike & Sarah Simon - 42 years
9 Dave & Cindy Krivanek - 25 years
9 Lee & Susan Retzlaff - 41 years
22 Tami & Richard Noll - 40 years
24 Don & Joy Hamburg - 30 years



**Congratulations and
God's Blessings!!**

Monona Messenger Newsletter articles for July 2025 are due on or before **Thursday, June 19th**. Articles can be emailed to the church office or dropped off at the church.

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General Fund Status

January 1 – April 30, 2025

Income

Weekly Offerings	38,943
Rental Income	13,496
Other	611

Total Income 53,050

Expenses 62,678

Net (9,628)

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JUNE 15th, 2025

Fathers can be solitary mountains, All their love rock-like, steep, and strong. Though warm and caring, somehow they belong, Half home to mothers' bubbling fountains. Each of us needs love that knows no quarter, Reminding us of bonds that cross a border, Strengthening our sense of right and wrong.

**Happy
Father's
Day!**



Please share: Please feel free to share the Portals of Prayer or any of the devotions we have with others. You are welcome to take them and leave them at the doctors, dentists, or at any appointments you may have. You never know when it will be just the thing someone needs that day.



BEAUTIFYING THE CHURCH

Thank you to everyone who donated the 24 geraniums for Pentecost Sunday. Due to my schedule, the flowers will be planted around May 23rd. Hoping for good weather so you will see the results on Memorial Day weekend. Please enjoy them for the season.

If you are interested in watering and/or weeding the in-ground plants and the pots located at the north and east side of the building, please contact me for details. We will again be looking for church members to purchase and plant the free standing pots (4). Please contact me to see which ones are available. Two on the north side are shaded and two on the eastside are sunny.

Both sides of the church sign out in front of the church will need some weeding as well. If you are willing to help, please contact me for more details. Once we are finished with the weeding, I will bring in some mulch to help keep the weeds down.

Thank you, Ann Rubin

Sunday School Once again, we are almost at the end of a Sunday School year. Our last Sunday School will be held June 1. ***Thank you*** to the Sunday School teachers and parents for all you do. We will begin again the first Sunday after Labor Day Weekend. Please keep us in your prayers for success in reaching the children.

Judy Thompson

Blood Donors We are having a blood drive at Monona Lutheran Church on Wednesday, June 4 from 1-6 pm. If you would like to donate, please contact Ann Rubin and she would be happy to schedule an appointment. You can also go online at RedCrossBlood.org and put in sponsor code MONONA and schedule your own appointment. As a thank you for your donation, there will be a \$15 gift card sent to you by email. Feel free to contact Ann with any questions.

Bulletin Bloopers!

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'
The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

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.

A Stewardship Thought

God-pleasing stewards are faithful in their prayer life, in worship, in reading God's Word, and in receiving God's Sacraments. God-pleasing stewards are faithful in sharing the Gospel. God-pleasing stewards are faithful stewards of the compassionate love of Jesus for others. God-pleasing stewards are faithful stewards of their time, talents, and treasures. God-pleasing stewards are faithful stewards of the kingdom of God in their families, in their work, and in daily living.

Testing your Knowledge of Scripture

Do you know who in Scripture gave some land for the work of the Lord?



If you said Barnabas, you were right. In Acts 4:36-37 we read, *"Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet."* In the early church, there were no

needy people because no one claimed that any of his possessions were his own. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, they shared with one another. Those with plenty gave to those in need. Barnabas willingly gave the land he owned for the work of the apostles.

With God's help, you, too, can give freely and generously of the blessings God has entrusted to you.

Tithing is not a gimmick to solve the economic problems of churches; it is a significant act of remembering who we are.

"Not to Be Served but to Serve"

The words of Matthew 20:28 - *"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* – remind us that the life of Jesus was one of total sacrifice. It is clear that Jesus expects His followers to have the same servant spirit heart as their Master. He said in Matthew 20:26, *"...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant."* He lived for His heavenly Father and for others. Just as Jesus served His Father, we exist to serve Him. Being conformed into the image of Christ we will take on the role of servants as He did.

The concept of serving rather than being served is not a natural one. We have an inborn desire to want to be served ourselves and to have our own needs met rather than to see to others. We, by nature, prefer to be "number one." In addition, our apathy contributes to our lack of interest in serving.

We are too wrapped up in ourselves even to notice the needs of others. Through His Word and Sacraments, God gives us a new perspective. He enables us to see others as our brothers and sisters in Christ and gives us the desire to follow His command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31).

A life of service and servanthood is contrary to what our society promotes. We are told that we should aspire to fame, power, and wealth. Servants receive no glory, spotlight, or fame, but a meaningful relationship with Christ is not possible if we put ourselves first and seek only the goals that are important to the world we live in. Living a life of service, we give of ourselves without striving for financial rewards or glory. Unlike the praise we receive from God, worldly praise has no lasting value. Along with the Apostle Paul we say, *"We are not trying to please men but God, Who tests our hearts"* (1 Thessalonians 2:4). As a servant, Jesus was not looking for praise from the masses, because He was interested in glorifying His Father.

Second Corinthians 12:15 says, *"So I will gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well."* Because of our desire to serve Jesus, we begin to identify

with the interest that He has in other people's lives. We forego our interests and begin to live a life of Christian service. *"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love"* (Galatians 5:13).



Our freedom expresses itself in the form of service. God brings us into a proper relationship with Himself so He can show us how to serve others. Jesus continually served the hungry, handicapped, and homeless, and we are called to be imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1). When we commit to serving others, it is not done for our own satisfaction or to put ourselves on a pedestal. We serve out of love for Christ and to be worthy of His calling.

Blessings on your Stewardship Journey!

Monona Lutheran Church's Endowment Fund

Monona Lutheran Church's Endowment Fund was created to establish a source of income for unusual needs within the church, its members, its community, and within the larger church body. Requests may include things like programs within the congregation, church worker scholarships, local ministries, and church facilities and expansion, among other needs. The money available to fund those requests comes from the earnings of the Endowment Fund, not its principle, meaning that donations to the fund are invested and the returns on those investments, not the donations themselves, are what are used to fund any disbursements.

So what has the Endowment Fund been used for in the past? Over the past several years, disbursements have been made for things like helping fund the Orphan Grain Train and Lutheran Disaster Relief, and to purchase an AED, large print hymnals, and pads and table cloths for the bell choir tables. In 2024, disbursements were made from the fund to pay for a new organ PC (\$4,018 - yes the organ runs from a computer – see Corey's article in the April Messenger) and the Generis program (\$2,700 – one of the facilitators for churches in harmony).

So how much is in the fund, how much is being contributed, and how much is being spent? As of the end of March 2025, the Endowment Fund's balance was \$217, 251. Contributions to the fund were \$2,850 in 2024 and the fund made requested disbursements of \$6,718 (these disbursements were from fund earnings in both 2023 and 2024). Please direct any questions regarding the fund's investment details to Mike Simon or Dave Krivanek.

If you're considering an Endowment Fund donation and have related questions, please review one of the brochures available on the table in the Fellowship Hall or talk to one of the Endowment Fund Board members (Mike Simon, Dave Krivanek, Jeanne Nowak, Don Hamburg, or Larry TerMaat). Your gift to the Endowment Fund will become a gift that keeps on giving.

Submitted by: Mike Simon, Endowment Fund Board Chair

Partnership Monthly Event: Plan now to attend the Partnership Game Night on **Tuesday, June 3rd at St. Paul** for a meal beginning at 5:30 pm with games and socializing after. The monthly event will take place at St. Paul again in July. Please remember to sign up for this event in the Fellowship Hall so they can prepare accordingly.

A Vacation Reminder:

Summer is a time for many people to travel and church attendance may be more sporadic for some. If you are going to be out of town, please consider dropping off your offering envelope in the mail.



Flower Calendar: The 2025 Flower calendar is on the wall by the office door. Please sign up to beautify the church by remembering someone special or in celebration of a special event.

LWML Gathering: Our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 12th at 9:00 a.m. We welcome all women of the church to join us for bible study and fellowship.

For those who ordered the ***Lutheran Woman's Quarterly***, they are available on the LWML table in the Welcoming Area along with the LWML-SWD latest edition of that publication.

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: Angie TerMaat or the church office at 222-7071. Also, please call if you would like to become a part of our Prayer chain.

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



MONONA MESSENGER
Monona Ev. Lutheran Church, LC—MS
4411 Monona Dr.
Monona, WI 53716
Address Service Requested

June 2025

Divine Worship
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Communion Services
1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

Sunday Christian Education Hour
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

Being a More Complete Person

People who only work, only play, only complain, miss out on the benefits of a more diversified approach to life. If you study a particular subject to the exclusion of all others, you will not be truly educated. The same is true for anything you pursue. If you dedicated your energies to only one facet of life to the exclusion of everything else, you precariously place your energy in only one area without realizing the variety of joys life has to offer.

People who pursue multiple interests—the professor who does woodwork on the weekend or the physicist who reads theology daily will find their lives richer. Richer even more when we in *“whatever [we] do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus”* (Colossians 3:17).

Life’s rewards do not come from devoting your energies to a single cause or pursuit. Balance and diversified interests—family, friends, vocation, spiritual life, arts, and recreation—create a more fulfilling existence and a more complete person. (From *Spiritual Investments* by Gary More)

Prayer: *Lord, help me to use what You’ve given me in ways that give You honor and glory. Amen.*

Blessings on your journey as a steward!



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

“Loving Christ, Serving Others through Preaching, Teaching, Reaching”