



MONONA MESSENGER

JULY 2025

+ What's on God's Refrigerator Door? +

If you are a parent or grandparent or even just an admirer of a young child, your refrigerator door may be the showcase of one or more paintings or drawings. To a visitor, that work of art may be just a mass of scribbles, but to the one who loves the child it is a masterpiece. We love the gift because of the person who made it and gave it to us. It is precious to us because it was a gift from the heart. The motive of the child was pure and loving.

Perhaps our gifts to God are similar. We're such amateurs, such babies. God could accomplish His work so much more efficiently by Himself. Our works, even if monumental by human standards, are just scribbles if God would judge them in relation to His ability. Because He loves us, though — and loves us far more than a parent or grandparent loves a child — He looks at our works with eyes of love. He sees our hearts and knows we are motivated by love and faith, and He is pleased. He is so pleased that, if He had a refrigerator, He'd use it to display our works done for His glory.

God has given us gifts to use for this purpose — to glorify Him by serving others. In 1 Peter 4:10 we read, "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. " God has seen to it that each of us has something to offer. He gives us the privilege of serving and then provides all that we need to do so.

Just as the budding art student improves with the help of a teacher and with appropriate tools to create his work, so does God teach us through His Word how to fulfill our purpose and how to improve our service. So also, He gives gifts of time and money and talents and then His Word and Sacrament to strengthen us for service.

May our Lord help each of us to ponder and appreciate this important aspect of our LIFE TOGETHER in Christ. May we especially join together in preparing to celebrate the Lord's death and resurrection with each offering of the Sacrament, and in the weekly celebration each Lord's day.

So, have a good, safe and enjoyable summer. But as you make plans to "get away from it all," please don't get away from your Savior. You can't afford to.

In His service, and for His sake your servant!

Pastor Nowak

God's Blessings to those Celebrating

Birthdays in July

Nick Richards	2
Tammy Deschner	3
Don Hamburg	8
Jim Meyer	9
Larry TerMaat	10
Gene Kosbau	26
Tyler Loss	27

Anniversaries in July

Gary & Gail Steingraber - 48 yrs; 9th
Mark & Meghan Steingraber - 14 yrs; 16th
Larry & Angie TerMaat - 40 yrs; 27th

Congratulations



Please note that the church office will be closed on Friday, July 4th in observance of *Independence Day*. Have safe travels and enjoy your freedoms.

St. Stephens Food Pantry

Next time you are shopping for food, add a couple things to your cart for the St. Stephen's Food Pantry. Donations of food, personal items, paper products and diapers (larger sizes) are all gratefully received. Please be sure to check the expiration date on the food. These items may be put in the little red wagon in the Welcoming Area.



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Thank You for allowing me to serve you these past 15 years. I thoroughly enjoyed all the friendships I made here at Monona and wish you all God's blessings as we all move forward toward our next adventures.

Anneliese

Please share:

Please feel free to share the July, August and September 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.

LWML Invites You to a Salad Supper

St. John Lutheran Ministries, 850 Armstrong St., Portage invites you to a salad supper on Tuesday, July 1st beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Christian Life Center. Guest speakers, Ken Manthey and Becky Jo Merlin, will share their experiences in disaster relief following Hurricane Helene and other disaster area in the south.

Bring your favorite salad and a friend! (Or show up; there is always plenty.)

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.



Online Newsletter:

Our church website has a copy of the current month's newsletter. If you misplace your paper copy, you can go there to read it: www.mononalutheran.org.

Volunteer Sign Up:

Ushers, readers, communion assistants, and members setting up the altar are needed every Sunday to make our worship special. Please consider helping in one or more ways to make others feel welcome at Monona Ev. Lutheran Church. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Welcoming Table giving you the opportunity to sign up individually. You are needed!

Entering the hospital?

Even if the hospital knows that Monona is your church, we are not notified. Please have someone call the office.

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.

Becoming Workers in the Harvest

Jesus knows we are sheep who need a shepherd. He came to be that shepherd, the shepherd who laid down His life for us, His sheep (John 10:11). During His life on earth, He went through out all the cities and villages...Then He said to His disciples, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest"* (Matthew 9:35-38).

God invites all of us to be His workers in the harvest field. He does not need us, but He gives us the privilege to be involved in this very important work. God has called us and chosen to work through us. What we can offer is our time and our talents. In Christ, we can do work that will be blessed into eternity. We begin this all-important work by asking or praying for a successful harvest with many workers being sent into the harvest field. Because of our prayers, He will provide the workers who are needed.

As we pray for God's work to be accomplished through workers in the field, we are, in essence, allowing Him to make us

the answers to our own prayers. God will find ways to use our gifts in ways that will touch others. We pray for God's work to be done, and that we ourselves may be involved in doing this work. God gives us strength to overcome the excuses that often plague us such as "I don't have the time" or "I'm not equipped." As Apostle Paul wrote, *"I can do all things through Him strengthens me"* (Philippians 4:13). So can we.



God Uses Jars of Clay

The Apostle Paul refers to himself, the people in Corinth, and us as "jars of clay." *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay..."* (2 Corinthians 4:7). While every jar has its weaknesses and flaws, God has chosen to deliver His eternal gifts to this world through such vessels (you and me). He may have to break and remake us from time to time but use us He will—with our cooperation and obedience. He only requires that we gratefully submit our bodies and wills for His use and consecrate our efforts and energies for His purposes.

Of course, we will have problems. There will be times when we will be clobbered by

conflict, even flattened in despair. It is quite possible that we may have to sacrifice status, popularity, even old friends, if we dare to let God have His way with us. Whatever we lose, however, we will regain a “*hundred-fold*” (Matthew 19:29) in this life or in the next. This is the promise of our God.

The truth is that we do not have to be discouraged—not for long. We can even be free from the fear of failure. Only then are we truly free to live or die—to spend and expend our lives joyfully for Jesus’ sake.

Quotes from the Well-known

“The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

“I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me is another matter.” (Winston Churchill)

“I am certain that there will be three surprises in Heaven. First of all, I will see some people there whom I never expected to see. Second, there will be a number whom I expect to be there who will not be there. And, even relying on His mercy, the biggest surprise of all may be that I will be there.” (Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen)

Love One Another

Charlie Brown’s young friend Linus made the mistake of confessing to his big sister Lucy that he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up. Lucy was astounded at her brother’s declaration. “You, a doctor! That’s a laugh! You could never be a doctor! You know why? Because you do not love mankind!”

Young Linus immediately responded, “I do love humankind! It is people I cannot stand! Linus expressed a feeling shared by many. However, God has called us to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are to lift others. With God’s help and strength, we can love others.



Gifts of Service

As students of the Bible, we have heard of Tabitha, aka Dorcas. We read about her in Acts 9:36-42. A miracle happened to her: She had died but was restored to life again through the ministry of Peter. She is introduced to us as one who “*was full of good works and acts of charity*” (verse 36). Who would think there was anything spectacular about a woman, known only to a small circle of people, who used her gift as a seamstress in service to others? Yet many churches have groups of women who serve others through their gifts and talents and who name themselves after that servant of the Lord, Dorcas. No gift is too small, no talent too inconsequential. God looks at our hearts and honors our gifts of service when they are done out of love and gratitude to Him.

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, July 1st at St. Paul** for a meal beginning at 5:30 pm with games and socializing after. 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:

LWML will be meeting on July 10th at 9am in the church library. Our Bible study will be, "What are you putting on?" on page 14 in the Summer LWML Quarterly. We will also be assembling hygiene kits for Orphan Grain Train.

All women are invited and we hope you'll join us.

Please remember to continue collecting your mites and bring them to the meeting!

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

July 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

“Sowing and Reaping”

You have probably been involved in planting a vegetable or flower garden, and you have realized that the more seeds you plant, the more plants you get. The Apostle Paul used the analogy of sowing and reaping (planting and harvesting) in relation to money. He wrote, *"Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully"* (2 Corinthians 9:6).

You know that if you plant a seed here and there, you will get a plant here and there, and the result will not be especially pleasing. Sowing sparingly yields sparse results. So, it is with money. If you give generously, you will reap for yourself and others great benefits.

Prayer: *Dear God, thank You for Your love and generosity to me. Help me to show my gratitude by spending time, talents, and money faithfully in Your service. Amen.*



Blessings on your journey as a steward!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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