



MONONA MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2019

EPIPHANY -- A Time of Worship, to Witness, to Win! **+ The Solitary Rose +**

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

As we continue in the Sundays after the Epiphany we realize that it is a season and time for emphasis upon evangelism, of the telling of the Good News from God's people.

For example, a traveler was staying in a small-town hotel. As he looked from his second-story window, he saw a gorgeous red rose blooming in a vacant lot next door. It was a single, solitary rose; but somehow it seemed to be all the more beautiful just because it stood alone.

As He walked by the vacant lot during the noon hour, he remembered the rose and decided that, if he could find it, he would pick it. But the lot was full of weeds, many of them taller than the rose, and from the sidewalk he couldn't see the beautiful bloom.

The next morning as he looked from his second-floor window, there was the same velvety rose, sparkling with diamonds of dew in the rays of the morning sun. From the vantage of his window he figured the exact position of the rose in this labyrinth of weeds and determined to go down and pick it.

Forcing his way through the thick brush and the almost impenetrable welter of weeds, he finally came to the thin perpendicular stem which held the fragile rose. How could this rose be growing *here*?

Carefully he traced the fragile stem down to the ground. But the stem did not end there. Laboriously he traced the stem as it stretched along the ground amid the weeds—until finally, some distance away, he found the stem firmly rooted in a cultivated patch of ground in the yard next door. It was *there* that it got its sustenance!

How very much like the child of God was that single, solitary rose! Frequently God places His Christians in the very midst of weed patches—in the very midst of godless men and women—not, indeed, to take on the appearance of the weeds, but to give forth the fragrance of the rose and to bloom with its refreshing beauty.

The Bible tells you and me that we are saints. Saints because of Christ. Saints because we have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. But as the saints of God, are we getting our nourishment and strength from “the cultivated patch of ground next door”—the life that is “hid with Christ in God,” the life that is rooted firmly in the Savior.

He who said “I am the Vine, you are the branches,” is the secret source of strength and beauty behind many a solitary rose in the weed patches of this world.

Are we “the people of God” gathered in this place (at this time) letting God's nourishment and strength (His Word and Sacraments) find Him in this cultivated ground?? A way (or step) for us as a congregation to be on the right path is through this “Mission Statement.” Its purpose is to be like a “sounding board” in which we can evaluate what projects/programs we are doing, and whether or not we should be doing them. In short, are we being fed for ourselves alone or are we being fed to feed others?

Below is a mission statement as a reminder on how we are to feed, and how we go about feeding others as we are cultivated to be The Solitary Rose. This is something that the whole congregation needs to have ownership in for it to be effective.

MISSION:

To **magnify** God's name, Monona Ev. Lutheran exists:

To Know God - To bring people to Jesus and membership in His family.

To Know God More Fully - Develop them to Christlike **maturity**.

To Make God More Fully Known - And equip them for their ministry in the church and their **mission** in the world.

In Christ, the Gift to be shared,
Pastor Nowak

SWD Office of Mission and Human Care

Mission Prayers

Week of February 3 – Please include **Dr. Sam Lee** in your prayers as he prepares to begin pastoral formation/education in the Specific Ministry Program to serve the Mandarin (Chinese) speaking community at our new church plant at Elm Grove Lutheran Church.

Week of February 10 - Please keep the District’s expanding Prison Ministry in your prayers this week and ask our Lord to sustain **Rev. Ryan Willis**, Chaplain to the inmates at the Oxford Federal Prison, and **Rev. Afam Ikanih**, Chaplain at the Milwaukee House of Correction, as they bring the promise of forgiveness in Christ Jesus to the inmates.

Week of February 17 – This week pray for all **international missionaries** serving around the world, asking the Lord of the Church to protect, preserve and increase their faithful work. Pray for an increase in their support so they can continue to preach, teach and confess Christ crucified for the sins of mankind, bringing hope and joy where they serve.

Week of February 24 – Remember our “**SOS**” **Center ministry** to the children of Milwaukee’s inner city, asking the Lord to keep the children safe from those who would harm them, equipping them with the armor of faith through those who provide after-school programs, meals and guidance in the Word of God.

Mission Opportunities Short Term: We received a thank you note from MOST ministries for our thoughtful and generous monetary gift. Because of our partnership with MOST, volunteer teams in 2019 will have the opportunity to share the Gospel and serve thousands more lost and hurting people on 5 continents! Praise God!

Madison Area Jail Ministry: We also received a thank you from the Madison Area Jail Ministry for our gifts to the ministry of Jesus Christ. They are grateful for all the support we and other area churches give to this ministry.

TLC Groups:
The **Tuesday morning** Tender Loving Care group will continue to meet on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month at Pastor’s house beginning at 9:00 am. The **Thursday evening** group meets in the church library on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month beginning at 7:00 pm. This is a great group if you want to strengthen your faith, get to know your fellow members better, introduce a friend or neighbor to our congregation. Everything that is discussed is and remains confidential. Once you experience a TLC group you’ll never want to give it up. Please plan to attend one of these groups.

St. Stephen’s Food Pantry: There is always a need for food pantry items. Next time you are shopping, add a couple of things to your cart for the Food Pantry. Donations of food, personal items, paper products, baby food and diapers are always gratefully received.

House of Thrift News: The store is located at 201 Cottage Grove Road. It is open from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm Tuesday through Saturday and from noon to 6:00 pm on Mondays. Donations are welcome during these hours. Please call them at 223-1228 if you have any questions or would like to become part of the *House of Thrift* team. Members of Monona work on the 1st and 3rd Saturday and on the 2nd and 5th Thursday of each month.

Ronald McDonald: 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 since they have significant value in the recycling industry and they do not have the storage to collect cans.

- 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.

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Holy Humor

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!"

His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?"

The son replied, "I do know!"

"Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?"

"That's easy, Daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth..'" (This one is my favorite)

* * * * *

When you carry the Bible, Satan gets a headache..... When you open it, he collapses..... When he sees you reading it, he faints..... When he sees that you are living what you read, he flees..... And when you are about to share this message.... He will try and discourage you.. I just defeated him!!! Any other takers?

The next Healing Service will be held again on Sunday, **February 10th**, after 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 for your convenience.

Sunday Morning Bible Study:

Please join us on Sunday's after the service as we continue to study the *Book of Revelation*.

LWML:

The next LWML gathering here at Monona will be on Saturday, February 9th, beginning at 9 am.

Blood Drive:

MLC and UCC had a joint blood drive on Thursday, January 24th at Monona Lutheran Church. We started with 38 appointment slots filled. At the end of the day we had 32 people that donated 31 pints of blood.

Thanks to all who helped make this possible either by donating or working the blood drive. We had wonderful assortment of cookies from Ken's Meats and Deli. A very successful drive for us especially on a cold January day. Thanks again!

Ann Rubin

Rebecca's Garden:

Our tutoring program continues to flourish, thanks to the efforts and contributions by many. With the snowbird season upon us, we could use a couple more volunteers. If you are interested, please contact Gary Steingraber.

Wednesday Bible Study:

The book of Exodus is the current topic Wednesday mornings. Feel free to join us if you have the opportunity. We meet in our Library from 10 to 11 am.

Quilter's Meet on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:00 am. Please feel free to join us for making quilts for Orphan Grain Train and for the fellowship we share.

Google Maps:

If you would like to help boost our review rating on Google Maps, please feel free. Google Maps is used by our website and by the LC-MS website to direct visitors to us, so we don't want someone to be discouraged from attending. Just click on the address marker for us in Google Maps, click on the "review" to the right of the star rating, and add your rating and comment.

CELEBRATE!

Birthdays in February

<i>Anna McNeil</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Nancy Deranick</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Meledie Hinson</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Zach Meyer</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Eric Dowse</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Phyllis Siegenthaler</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Nate Dowse</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Joan Lindert</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Marie Shores</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Brian Hoffmann</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Cindy Krivanek</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Brian Showers</i>	<i>24</i>

Anniversary in February

Ann & Larry Rubin – 36 years; Feb. 10th

Congratulations and God's Blessings!



VOTERS' MEETING

Sunday

February 24th, 2019

10:15 a.m.



Please plan on attending.

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.”**

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.

The Good Samaritan

Read Luke 10:25-37.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus told about a man who, as he was going down the road to Jericho, was robbed, beaten, and left half dead alongside the road. At different times, a priest and a Levite (religious leader) passed by the injured man, but neither chose to give him any help. When the Samaritan came upon the injured person, he had pity on him. Dismounting from his donkey, he bandaged the beaten man's wounds and showed additional compassion by putting the man on his donkey and taking him to an inn. Before leaving the inn, he paid the innkeeper two silver coins for continued care of the injured man. The Samaritan also promised he would return and give the innkeeper additional money should more care be needed.

The Samaritan did not do this work of love and charity on a reciprocal basis. There was no way of knowing if the injured person would even express any gratitude for his actions. The Samaritan willingly sacrificed his time and money. He was able and willing to meet the injured person at his point of need. He fulfilled the Golden Rule, which is, "*And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them*" (Luke 6:31).

Whatever our position or status in life, we are called to share God's love in acts of service to all people. "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*" (James 2:8) is a command to everyone. Jesus proclaimed, "*Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me*" (Matthew 25:40).



Parable of the Talents

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

In the Parable of the Talents, the master (Jesus) was planning to go on a long journey. Before his departure, he entrusted three servants (you and me) with various amounts of money, which in Jesus' time were called talents. The master knew that his servants had different amounts of abilities, so, to the one who was most gifted, he gave five talents, to another two, and to the last just one.

The master's observations and assessments of his servants' abilities were correct, because the servant who was given five talents and the one

given two talents went out without hesitation to invest their talents faithfully and deliberately. The servant who received five talents gained five more and the one who received two earned two more. The master applauded their individual efforts, commitment, and faithfulness with these words to each of them: *“Well done, good and faithful servant!”* The master’s response to the servant who did nothing with his talent wasn’t so kind. He admonished him saying, *“You wicked and slothful servant!”*



Through this parable, we learn that God is concerned about the management of our money. He wants and expects us to multiply the resources He entrusts to us. The following are some principles that we learn from this parable:

- Everything we have comes from God.
- Our business life is important to God.
- Wise management and wise investing of money please the Lord.
- Poor management and poor investing displease Him.
- God does have high expectations of us as we use, manage, and invest His resources.

Some day we will be held accountable. What will God say about the way we handled and invested money? When we are faithful and cause His gifts to grow, we will hear those words, *“Well done, good and faithful servant!”*

Serving Others

One of the real joys in life that God gives us is the opportunity to serve and help others. A “thank you” from those we help is nice but even more rewarding is the inner satisfaction which comes from doing something for someone else. Unfortunately, because of our human nature, we tend to focus on our own needs and desires rather than being sensitive to the needs of others.

Our primary example of service is the life that Jesus lived while on earth. Jesus lived a perfect life of complete service to those He came to save, and His death and resurrection were His supreme acts of service. Jesus said that the most important commandment is *“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ ”* (Mark 12:30-31). Our service is made possible through love. If love is not the motivating force behind the service, then our service is done for the wrong reasons.

Where Is your Treasure?

When things start possessing us, God is moved to the periphery, and our desire to possess prohibits our spiritual growth. Matthew 6:21 says, *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* How distressing it is to find that the things we earnestly pursued and believed we needed for our welfare, once attained, turned out to be the cause of growing emptiness.

Blessings on your stewardship journey!

MONONA MESSENGER

Newsletter of: 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.

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

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March 2019

Messenger Deadline

February 21st, 2019

NO LATE ARTICLES

Please submit articles by this date.

Email to: mlc-ms@hotmail.com

or leave a copy on the office desk

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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