



# **MONONA MESSENGER**

## **SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **+ Education: Foolishness or Wisdom +**

*Proverbs 1:7*

As the summer disappears and thoughts of classes fill our mind once again, we at the church are also thinking about our learning and how God blesses and even encourages it. As we look about ourselves we can't help but notice the beauty of the world and our understanding of it.

For us as Christians though this understanding is enlightened via the Holy Spirit through the Word—especially with such understanding available through **The** book of wisdom for life—the book of Proverbs. Right from the beginning of the book God led Solomon to write, *“Fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* You know, those who think they know it all and have nothing further to learn.

But through our many failures we all come to know that after school there's plenty more to learn! I'm sure we have all been in that place when a young grad joins the work force and thinks they know not only how to do their job but how we should better be doing ours.

And, if we are honest with ourselves, perhaps at one time we walked in those same shoes. Without our schooling we would never know how to begin, but that schooling needs years of seasoning and experience before we can rightly know what we are doing.

Thank God for His Word that educates us in the most important learning of a lifetime. The book of Proverbs says it well like this: *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

And at the peak of that instruction is our religious instruction. Why is that? Because the Word of God imparts life (eternal life—life to the full) when all other knowledge disappears and becomes as dust. How important then is this instruction above all others. Without it our man made filters (sin) will misunderstand the world and our place in it. Without it we will never truly know God as He should be known, nor the relationship He wants to have with us displayed so clearly with Jesus on the cross.

For far too many their education stops with their formal training when in reality this is only a seed to even better and improved wisdom. This is especially true in the church where our learning of God is so vital in our day-to-day lives.

I mean, so what's up with that. It doesn't make sense. The above verse from Proverbs tells us that this is foolish. In other words the word “foolish” here is used by God to mean a person who is thinking in the ways of the world, and not God's way. God's way is to grow in our knowledge of His Word poured out by His Spirit in the study of that Word and gifted in the holy Sacraments.

So what can **we** do to become wise? Well, take advantage of the gifts already offered by God beginning with the study of His Word in Sunday morning Bible class. Here is where we together grow in God's Word and attain knowledge—not only finding out more about God, but also about ourselves as we get the chance to share our own story and learn knowledge and experience from others. And that includes me! I learn from your experiences and how God touches your lives as much as I share mine with you.

With the kids soon beginning school again and we also kicking things off with Rally Day (September 8<sup>th</sup>) now is the idea time for all of us to go “back to school” with our Lord Jesus Christ. As you do your daily devotions don't you find God's Word fascinating as Jesus reveals God and how He thinks? In the Word you get to “pick” God's brain as it were and at the same time have your eyes opened with the understanding of things the world finds impossible to understand.

As God's people we love “wisdom and instruction” in His Word. Join us not just on Sundays, but also on Wednesday and with TLC groups on Tuesday and Thursday's as you are able.

Working the harvest with you!

*Pastor Nowak*

**The next Healing Service** will be held again on Sunday, **September 8<sup>th</sup>**, 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.

**SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

<i>Bess MacLeod</i>	4
<i>Rayne Hemminger</i>	5
<i>Evelyn MacLeod</i>	5
<i>Lynn Reinholtz</i>	5
<i>John Russell</i>	8
<i>Trevon Ampe</i>	15
<i>Audrey Meyer</i>	15
<i>Richard Noll</i>	17
<i>Pastor Thomas Nowak</i>	18
<i>Una Wolff</i>	28

**SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- Marcel & Joan Lindert - 52 years; 9/2*
- Ethan & Karen Bartlett - 5 years; 9/6*
- Dr. Gordon & Pat Lofgren - 66 years; 9/12*
- Carl & Kris Dowse - 40 years; 9/22*
- Dale & Marge Thur - 52 years; 9/23*



*Congratulations and  
God's Blessings to All!*

**Rebecca's Garden Tutoring Program:** Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of our school year, offering free tutoring and mentoring weekly to elementary school students. If you aren't already part of the program but might be interested, please contact Gary Steingraber. We are also recruiting more students and tutors, so if you know of anyone, alert them to the opportunity.

**TLC:** The Tuesday morning *Tender Loving Care* group at Pastors' will begin on September 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am and the Thursday evening group will resume again on September 12<sup>th</sup> at the church 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 remains confidential. Please plan to attend.

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study:** The study of the books of Samuel and Kings continues from 10 am to 11 am on Wednesdays in our Library. No homework is required and attendance every week is optional.

*Have a safe Labor Day weekend!  
The office will be closed on Monday.*

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**

*Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup>*

Lake Edge United Church of Christ  
4200 Buckeye Rd.  
1:00 pm until 6:00 pm.  
There is always a great need.



**Choir Rehearsals Resume.**



*Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.  
Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his  
presence with singing. (Psalm 100)*

With that in mind, won't you please consider joining one, or both of our choirs! Rehearsals will resume on September 18<sup>th</sup> for the vocal choir and September 25<sup>th</sup> for the bell choir. Rehearsal time is 6:30pm in the choir loft. A printed schedule of rehearsal and service dates will be available then.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me in person or check the church directory for my phone number or email. *Corey*

**Website**—We can be proud of our website. With Dr. Krubsack's commentaries on the Sunday lessons, you have the opportunity to preview the lessons as part of your devotions, to better understand the background of those lessons and Sunday's message. Check it out at [www.mononalutheran.org](http://www.mononalutheran.org).



**RALLY DAY PICNIC**

**When: Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30am**

**Where: Pastor and Jeanne's home at  
909 Crestview Drive, Madison, WI 53716**

**Why: *Please join with us as we help the  
children, parents and teachers celebrate  
the start of Sunday School!***

You are invited to our home on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> following Sunday School and Bible Class. We will furnish the BBQs, Hot Dogs, Brats and Beverages. If you would like to bring a salad or dessert, there is a sign-up sheet in the Welcoming Area. Feel free to contact Jeanne if you have any questions (#516-506-1629, and leave a message if during the work day). Please don't feel like you have to bring anything. We know there is always more than enough food! (As we get closer to the date, we may ask for help setting up tables and chairs on Saturday.)

Blessings!  
*Pastor and Jeanne*

# *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 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.

## ***Defining Stewardship***

Stewardship is faith in action.

Stewardship is not a list of dos and don'ts. Stewardship is about the heart.

Stewardship is about waking up in the morning ready to listen to what God wants us to do today.

Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes (LCMS).

## **Testing your Knowledge of Scripture**

Can you identify who the following person may represent in Scripture?



If you said the Rich Fool, you were right. In Luke 12:13-21, Jesus tells us about a wealthy man who wanted to build bigger barns to store his surplus so

he could eat, drink, and be merry. Jesus didn't call him a fool because he wanted to grow his business, but He did call him a fool because the farmer gave no credit to God for his blessings nor did he have any interest in sharing what he had with others. When the end of his life came, the possessions he had hoarded were of no value to him. He would spend eternity separated from Jesus. Do you possess your possessions or are they possessing you?

## **We Can't Outgive God**

Giving begins with God Who is the greatest giver of all. *"For God so loved the world He gave..."* (John 3:16). When we give our gifts to God, He gives back more to us. We can never outgive God. God doesn't need what we are able to give, but we have a need to give. In His infinite wisdom, God establishes giving as a means of developing a relationship and connectedness with Him. Therefore, God, Who gave 100 percent of Himself for us, seeks a response from us. God wants us to experience the joy of giving and is honored when we give Him our first and best. Our giving, when done without reservation, has its source in God. God, Who abides in us, enables us to give.

## **Jesus is our Chief Steward**

God sent us His Son so we might have life and have it abundantly. Jesus took our sins upon Himself and became our Savior. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). He came, not only to die on the cross for us, but also to show us how to live. As Jesus lived among us, He became our model for stewardship. He lived a life of love for His heavenly Father and others. *"Greater love*

*has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends*” (John 15:13). Jesus lived a life of love that pleased His Father. God said, *“This is My Son, Whom I love; with Him I am well pleased”* (Matthew 3:17).

Jesus’ stewardship challenges us as stewards to follow Him and do what He did. Of course, we are incapable of perfectly following the life of Jesus, but, as our faith matures, we become more like Christ. Jesus not only talked about love; He walked in love. To be more like Jesus means that we reflect the love that He first gave to us (1 John 4:19). When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, He responded, *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matthew 22:37-38). By ourselves, we are incapable of loving others. However, as Christ fills us with His love, we can share His love with others. Because He first loved us, we can love others (1 John 4:19).

Stewardship consists of individual acts of giving and sharing but is much more besides. Faithful stewardship is a way of life or a lifestyle. Jesus modeled the perfect stewardship lifestyle. His love and devotion to His Father enabled Him to live in complete obedience—obedience that He demands of us: *“If you love Me, you will obey what I command”* (John 14:15). Obedience is evidence of our love for Christ. Jesus’ example of love and obedience gives us a model to follow. Through God’s Word and Sacrament, we will understand our privilege to follow Jesus’ example of a God-pleasing steward.

### ***On the Lighter Side***

One day a farmer came into the house and greeted his wife with a big smile, saying, “I’ve got some great news. Our finest cow just gave birth to twin

calves, one white and one brown. I’ve got a notion to give one to the Lord and keep one for ourselves.”

The wife, being a very perceptive woman, asked, “Which one are you going to give God—the white one or the brown one?”



Her husband replied, “It won’t make any difference because we will raise them together and when they are of marketable age, we’ll split the proceeds, half for the Lord and half for us.”

Well, sometime later the farmer entered his house, this time with a very sad look. “I’ve got some bad news,” he said. “The Lord’s calf just died.”

### ***What Is Your Life Worth?***

To those who love you, the worth of your life is incalculable, but what would you say your life is worth? Paul said his life was worth nothing to him. He said that because he had a higher goal in mind. Paul lived for one purpose only, and that was to serve the Lord. His life was valuable only in that it was used to *“finish the race”* and keep the faith (Acts 20:24).

Just as Paul, having been called to faith by the Lord Jesus Christ, was a steward of God’s gifts, so are we. Paul finished his race; however, we are still in the midst of running our race and completing the task the Lord has given us.

**Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!**

+ ***“Discover the Joy in Sharing God’s Blessings”*** +

This year’s annual stewardship emphasis is titled: *“Discover the Joy in Sharing God’s Blessings.”* In this three-week emphasis, we will discover the joy that we as God’s people can experience as we share the Gospel, as we faithfully use our time and talents to serve God by serving others, and as we give our money generously.

In the ESV Bible translation, the word “joy” or “rejoice” is used 57 times. As Christians, joy ought to be a characteristic of our lives. The Lutheran Study Bible notes, “Joy is not the ephemeral happiness that worldly pleasures bring, but the deep and abiding joy of being loved by God through Jesus Christ. It is an emotional appreciation for good things received. A result of God’s grace toward believers.” In this definition, we understand that joy is not based on circumstances. It is more than happiness that we can experience from positive situations and activities in life. Joy comes from recognizing that God is in control and that He loves us, even when we don’t feel happy. When we look at what God has done for us, we respond with gratitude and joy.

Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (*Galatians 5:22-23*). Each of the nine different fruit that are identified in the book of Galatians is given to us by God’s grace. Joy is a grace bestowed on us by God. Someone once said, “The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything.” Jesus tells us, *“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy be in you, and that your joy may be full”* (*John 15:11*). When we abide in Jesus, we will have the fullness of His joy.

By God’s grace, joy is part of our lives. Knowing who we are and Whose we are, we are empowered to live lives filled with joy. When we abide in Jesus and live in obedience to Him our joy is made complete. God’s Word directs us to use our time, talents, and money in ways that help others and extend His kingdom. When we use our blessings in obedience to God’s will, we will experience even more joy. This emphasis offers the following weekly themes:

- *“Jesus Is our Joy and Strength”*
- *“Discover the Joy in Serving”*
- *“Discover the Joy in Giving”*

God will equip us to use our blessings in ways that give Him honor. God fills our hearts with love for Him and His Church, so we are energized to share our blessings with others.

Our emphasis will start on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Working the harvest with you!

*Pastor Nowak*

**Sunday School 2019-2020**

September 15<sup>th</sup> is our Sunday School Rally day. Pastor and Jeanne will be hosting a picnic at their home immediately following Sunday school. Our Sunday school is a small and mighty messenger of God’s word. We plan to work on memorizing the books of the Bible in addition to our regular lessons. Our service project this year will again be Operation Christmas Child. Thank you to the Sunday school teachers and parents for all you have done and plan to do. Please keep us in your prayers for a successful start. — *Judy Thompson*

**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.”**

## MONONA MESSENGER

Newsletter of: Monona Ev. Lutheran Church, LC-MS  
4411 Monona Dr.  
Monona, WI 53716

Address Service Requested

September 2019

### **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

**Office Phone:** 608.222.7071

**E-mail:** mlc-ms@hotmail.com

**Website:** www.mononalutheran.org

## **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD MISSION PROJECT**

This year we would like to do another Mission Project for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. We plan to fill shoe boxes with items that will bring smiles to children who are less fortunate in other parts of the world. **The collection week this year is November 18<sup>th</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>**, when we need to have our boxes packed and delivered to the local collection center.

We'd like to try something different this year. We would like to pack and complete the boxes by October 27<sup>th</sup> at the latest. Our plan is to purchase items ahead of time to make the boxes more consistent and easier to pack. Instead of asking for donated items, we are **asking for monetary donations**. The money will go toward purchasing items to go into the boxes and/or shipping charges of \$9 per box that Samaritan's Purse requests. Our goal this year is to pack 35 boxes.

If you would like to make a monetary donation for this Mission Project, please see me or make a check payable to Monona Lutheran Church and designate it for **Operation Christmas Child**. There will be envelopes available in the Welcoming Area and narthex. (You can put the designated donations in the offering plate or give to me.)

Please remember that these gifts will also include a Gospel book in the language of the child receiving it. What a blessing that we might be able to give the gift of Jesus to someone who might not otherwise hear about God's love! These gifts may not only change the lives of the children receiving them, but also their families and friends.

If you see any great deals on items as you are out and about, or have any suggestions or questions, please let me know! Feel free to contact me at 516-506-1629.

Thank You and God's Blessings!

*Jeanne Nowak*

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

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