



MONONA MESSENGER

APRIL 2025

+ Easter Triumph +

There is a story that when the battle of Waterloo was being fought, the people of England were dependent upon a system of semaphore signals to learn of the tide of battle. One of these signals was on the tower of Winchester Cathedral.

Late in the day it flashed the signal: "Wellington defeated!" Just at that moment one of those sudden English clouds of fog obscured the signal. The news of disaster spread throughout the city. The whole countryside was steeped in dark despair.

Suddenly the fog lifted, and the remainder of the message could be read. There were not only two words being flashed. There were four. And the completed message read: "Wellington defeated — the enemy!" In a moment, sorrow was turned into joy, defeat into victory.

So, it was when Jesus was laid into the tomb on that first Good Friday. Hope had died even in the hearts of His most loyal friends. After the frightful crucifixion the fog of disappointment and disillusionment had settled on the faithful few. They had read only part of the divine message. "Christ defeated!" was all they knew.

But on the third day the impenetrable fog of despair lifted, and there was flashed to the world the completed message, not of defeat, but of victory, not of death, but of life. For the completed Easter message was a triumphant shout: Christ defeated death!

Good Friday and Easter are inseparables in God's great plan of man's redemption. St. Paul wrote to his Christians at Rome that Christ "was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25)

On Good Friday the Savior was offered up as the atoning Sacrifice for the sins of all men ("delivered for our offenses"); but on Easter morning the heavenly Father raised His Son in order to proclaim to all men everywhere that He had accepted the payment of His Son for the world's iniquity ("raised again for our justification").

Easter, therefore, is pre-eminently a day of triumph. It is the day on which the Son of God emerged victorious over sin, death, hell, and the grave.

*He lives triumphant from the grave,
He lives eternally to save,
He lives all-glorious in the sky,
He lives exalted there on high.*

*He lives, all glory to His name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives,
"I know that my Redeemer lives!"*

Christ Crucified for you!
Pastor Nowak

Birthdays in April

Marcia Hur 2
Anna Rutherford 5

Anniversary in April

Bess & Jess MacLeod – 17 years; April 12th



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

Monona Messenger:

Newsletter articles for the May 2025 issue are due on or before Monday, April 21st. Articles can be emailed to the church office or dropped off at the church.

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General Fund Status

January 1 – February 28, 2025

Income

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Weekly Offerings | 17,295 |
| Rental Income | 6,471 |
| Other | 291 |

Total Income 24,057

Expenses 34,258

Net (10,202)

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Bible Study:

Immanuel is hosting a Bible Study on Tuesday's beginning at 6:30 pm. Please note that they will not meet on weeks with a Game Night. Everyone is welcome to attend.



Portals of Prayer

is a great little devotional book that you can use for daily reading. The April, May and June issue is available on the tables in the Narthex and Welcoming Area. Feel free to stop in and pick up one for yourself and/or share with a friend.

A Prayer Vigil

will be held on Saturday, April 19th, from 9 am to 2 pm. Please feel free to come anytime and stay as long as you'd like. If you would like, there will be a *Prayer Guide* to use for your meditation.



Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) News

At the 2024 LWML-SWD convention it was voted to fund \$220,000 in Mission requests. The Grants that have already been paid off are: Orphan Grain Train-\$15,000; Lutheran Counseling & Family Services of WI Child Therapy Expansion-Mental Health Coverage-\$25,000; and the SWD Church Worker Grant-\$30,000. These have all been funded by "Mites" that members have sent in.

Upcoming Events

Cross Lutheran Church in Waunakee is hosting the LWML **Zone 16 Spring Gathering** on April 26th. Please consider joining us for fellowship with ladies across the Madison area and join Pastor Joel for a continuation of our Judges Bible study. Our Gathering includes a light breakfast starting at 8:30 and lunch around noon. We hope to see you there!

Heart to Heart-Sisters of All Nations Event

"United in Christ: Celebrating Our Unique Stories" Saturday, May 17 at St. John's in Glendale.

The Fall Retreat will be held at the Embassy Suites in Brookfield on September 26-27

More information can be found at lwml-swd.org

Designated Envelopes:

Please consider using the "Designated Envelopes" found on the table in the Welcoming Area to support the organizations affiliated with Monona Lutheran Church. Some of the organizations we support are: Missions; LWML Mites; Orphan Grain Train; Social Ministry; etc. When you fill out the envelope, please indicate what organization you are supporting, the dollar amount and your envelope number. If you have any questions, please contact either Jeff Thur or the office. Thank you.

MONONA'S EASTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Come and join us during Holy Week as we remember and celebrate our Savior's suffering, death, and resurrection on our behalf. This year's Easter schedule includes:

- April 13th Palm Sunday w/Communion
Monona Lutheran 9:00 am
- April 17th Maundy Thursday w/Communion –
Monona Lutheran @ 6:00 pm
- April 18th Good Friday – Immanuel Lutheran 1:30 pm
- April 20th Easter Sunday w/Communion
Monona Lutheran 9:00 am
Fellowship Brunch 8:00 am



HAPPY EASTER

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.

Living Wisely

"Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold" (Proverbs 3:13-14). Throughout Scripture, and especially in the book of Proverbs, the virtue of wisdom is extolled. It would be beneficial to us, then, to concentrate on living wisely

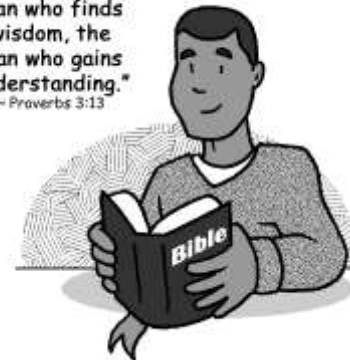
How do we gain that wisdom that Solomon wrote about? We learn from Proverbs 9:10 that *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* Proverbs 2:6 points out that *"... the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding."* Our God, Creator of all good things, is also willing and eager to give us all these things, including the gift of wisdom.

For how many of us is living wisely a goal? We pursue health, wealth, power, and success. Where on our lists of priorities is a desire for wise living? In our acquisition of facts, information, and knowledge, are we gaining wisdom as well?

When Solomon, renowned through the ages for his great wisdom, became king, God told him to ask for whatever he wanted. Solomon requested, *"So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people . . ."* (1 Kings 3:9). A chapter later, in 1 Kings 4:29-30,

we read, "God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt." That same wisdom is available to us. James 1:5 exhorts us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, Who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

*"Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding."
- Proverbs 3:13*



God's Power

God's love is the energizing power so essential to every life. Christ's love summons us to a secure and happy life of repentance, forgiveness, and sanctification. *"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, therefore all died. And He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him Who died for them and was raised again"* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Because of God's love, we put away all idols which the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature place before us. That love causes us to put duties before pleasures, to love God and our neighbors.

Receiving through Giving

It is ironic that, while we spend an inordinate amount of time and energy working to achieve personal satisfaction and success, that goal is more readily attained through giving to and serving others. As we give ourselves to others, we are also being refreshed and blessed. *“A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed”* (Proverbs 11:25). Proverbs also says, *“He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done”* (Proverbs 19:17). Through faith, we can choose to take time from our busy schedules and make a commitment to help those in need. As we, in Christ, help and give support to the needy, God will also bless us.

God Uses the Ordinary

Why does God elevate those of us with few talents, the foolish, and the lowly to be His workers? A reason may be found in 1 Corinthians 1:29: *“so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.”* It is only by God’s grace that we are saved, called, and equipped to be in His service. If we come into God’s work with impressive talents, we risk taking the glory and credit for ourselves. God desires the weak and the lowly. As Paul said, *“Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong”* (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). God uses ordinary people to do extra-ordinary things. Are you ready for duty?

Gambling Can Enslave You

A *Business Week* magazine observed that gambling has indeed entered the mainstream of American society. It is now touching the lives of nearly everyone, even the person who does not gamble. Since gambling can

enslave people and bring them personal and family tragedy, Christians need to provide spiritual care to one another in this area. Only the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose love sets us free, will enable us to overcome such a burden (Romans 8:1-17). God loves us deeply, forgives the sins of those who trust in him, and helps us to resist the temptation to “lay up treasures” for ourselves. Our sins are forgiven in Christ, including the sins of greed and lovelessness toward others. At the same time, God helps us to open our hearts in love and kindness, for he is at work in us both *“to will and work for His good pleasure”* (Philippians 2:13).



Stewards; Not Owners

In order for us to honor God with our finances, we need to remember that our money is really not our money. Psalm 24:1 says, *“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”* God owns it all and gives to us as He pleases. No matter how much we like to think we earned it, we don’t have anything that God didn’t give us. The first job Adam and Eve were given—even before they fell into sin—was management. They were put in charge of the Garden of Eden. They were to tend it, but they did not own it. In the same way, we are only tending what is in our possession. Nothing we have will be ours for eternity. Whatever we have came from God and will return to Him.

Blessings on your Stewardship Journey!

New Computer for Organ Thanks to Endowment Fund

I realized late last year that it had been 10 years since I started refurbishing/rebuilding the organ. I have very much enjoyed the upgrades as a player, and I hope you have enjoyed them as a listener!

It was also last year where I personally experienced the crashing of two rather large computer hard drives at home. Thankfully, most everything was backed up, but recovery was still not fun.

You may be asking yourself "what does one thing have to do with the other?" That is a very fair question. The simple answer is "time takes its toll". When I realized the computer running the organ was now 10 years old, I recognized that we were on somewhat borrowed time before there was a hard drive failure (or worse) with the organ at church. I also remembered that I had started to perform a software upgrade at church, but a technical issue halted that. Then covid hit, and now, we are way out of any kind of technical support windows for the software... we are 5 versions behind! All of these things are in one way or another victims to time and perhaps progress.

Pondering various options and ways to pay for them (I kind of planned on doing it slowly out of my own pocket), I heard there was endowment fund money available. I went to Mike Simon to make an initial inquiry. I was told to submit a proposal. After seeking a bit more advice from Mike, I submitted the proposal for a completely modern and up-to-date computer. The final result was the purchase of a new computer, with up-to-date software that is expected to serve the church for another 10 years, hopefully more.

What are the most interesting specs of this new pc?

- Intel i9 Processing – a high-performance processor designed for demanding tasks. The organ software requires a lot of incredibly fast and complicated execution of potentially thousands of organ pipe sounds at the same time.
- 192 GB RAM. That is A LOT of RAM, but it helps ensure reliable performance and will allow for other software upgrades over the years. It is in this RAM where literally 1000s, even tens of thousands, of individual .wav files sit in memory waiting to be played at an instant with the press of a note. (all of that is coordinated via the processor, bullet point one)
- 2 TB hard drive (the old organ had about 500GB) to store various organ configurations/sample sets.

[NOTE: A sample set is the "collection" of sampled (detailed recordings) organ stops that make up an organ. We have two primary organs, Hereford Cathedral ("warm/romantic" sound) as well as the Laurenskerk organ in Rotterdam ("Brighter/classical" sound).]

As a friend of mine would say "that computer will chase you around the room!" It was always an interesting visual that made me chuckle.

I took possession of the computer just before Christmas. Waiting on one last technical issue, the new computer was finally installed on 2/17. I'm still setting things up, but most functionality is where it needs to be. The extra resources have allowed me to make improvements in how the organ is configured. These changes and the updated software have improved the authenticity of the sound. I hope you can sense that, too!

Corey



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



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

Love Makes Us Do It

When Jesus went willingly to the cross on Good Friday, the world witnessed the greatest possible gift of love. *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends”* (John 15:13). Because of God’s tremendous love for us, we are empowered to love and serve others. Love makes us do some outrageous serving and giving. For example, in Luke 7:36-50, we read the story of the sinful woman who washed Jesus’ feet with expensive perfume. In response to His great love and forgiveness, she poured expensive perfume from an alabaster jar on Jesus’ feet. If CNN, Fox News, or ABC had been around at the time of this event, they would have jumped at the opportunity to ask her what prompted her to wash Jesus’ feet with such expensive perfume. Her answer would have been, “Love made me do it.”



Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, Your love is new to me each and every day. Help me not take Your love for granted. I pray that Your love within me will overflow to those around me. In Jesus’ precious name I pray. Amen.*

Blessings on your journey as a steward!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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