



MONONA MESSENGER

JANUARY 2025

+ Pray for those in Authority +

This month, we Americans will experience a change in government. Some are happy with the change, while others think our country is heading in the wrong direction. Regardless of our feelings regarding our leaders, we are commanded to pray for them. Paul, writing to Timothy "urges" that "requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority (1 Timothy 2; 1-2). While it is Paul who writes the words, we know that it is God Who gave the message. In other words, this command comes from Almighty God Himself! And why? We are given several reasons:

- "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Timothy 2:2)
 - because "there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God" (Romans 13:1).
- because "they keep watch over [us] as men who must give an account" (Hebrews 13: 17a)
 - "so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to [us]" (Hebrews 13: 17b).

At the same time, as stewards of the Gospel and as those who put God's Law above manmade law, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). Therefore, it is our Christian duty and responsibility to be involved in our government, first and foremost through prayer for our leaders as well as for our fellow citizens, through speaking the truth in love relating to decisions and policies put forward and/or enacted, and then through informed voting as we educate ourselves on the issues confronting our great nation.

Certainly, we give thanks to God our Father Who has given us this great land where we enjoy many privileges, greatest among them, the right to assemble for worship, to pray unhindered, and to speak the message of salvation to all who will listen.

A fellow worker of the harvest,
Pastor Nowak

Birthdays in January

2 Gary Thompson
3 Mark Steingraber
17 Marcel Lindert
17 Lori Parisi
19 John McNeil
23 Jeanette Schellpfeffer
25 Isaac Loss
26 Mike Reinholtz
28 Ethan Bartlett

***Congratulations &
God's Blessings!!***



Mark732 Deaf Outreach:

You are encouraged to support the Deaf ministry by putting a donation in one of the envelopes found on the table in the Welcoming Area.

MONONA MESSENGER:

Newsletter articles for **February 2025** are due by **Tuesday, January 21st, 2025.**

Articles can be emailed to the church office or dropped off at the church.

Blood Drive:

January 2025 will be right around the corner and we are preparing for our first blood drive of the New Year. It will be at Monona Lutheran in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, January 9th from 1-6pm. If you would like to donate please contact *Ann Rubin* at Monona Lutheran.

Please remember that there is always a need for blood. Each donation has the ability to help three people. Plan now to help us to reach our goal of 35 donations.

Ann Rubin



Greetings to all my LWML sisters,

No LWML meeting in January as several of us will be on vacation.

Our next LWML meeting will be February 13th at 9 am at the church. Gail is not up to having all of us at her house for the meetings now. Please keep her in your prayers.

Our Bible study will be "God sees our story- Therefore Rejoice" on page 18 of the winter quarterly. We will then put together hygiene kits for the homeless in Madison.

Be sure to take a look at the winter quarterly. There are many good articles & information about the National Convention in June, 2025 in Omaha, NE.

Continue to remember your mite box and your prayers for our mite recipients.

Have a blessed Christmas and a healthy New Year,
Ellen

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.

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 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.

A Big Thank You to *Woodie Meyer* for faithfully taking the items to *St. Stephen's Food Pantry* and making sure *Ronald McDonald House* gets all the pull tabs that members bring in.

PLEASE NOTE:

Partnership Council Meeting will be held on
Sunday, January 12th, at
Monona beginning at 1:30 pm

**Happy New Year
Happy New Year**

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 New Start

The soloist began to sing a special song during the worship service. It was awful! She had somehow started on the wrong note, terribly out of tune with the accompanist. She abruptly stopped and announced she needed a new start. She then began anew with a beautiful addition to the morning worship. Had she tried to limp through the first try, people would have remembered the off-key solo. Instead, by her second start, the congregation was assisted in their worship of the Lord.

That is the way it is with our lives, too. Our first start in life, our birth, is awful because of sin. We are born with a sin condition that makes it impossible for us to please God no matter how hard we try. We are captive to disobedience of God and His Law, to "doing it our way" and the passions of sin. But unlike the soloist we cannot even recognize we are out of tune with God.

Then it is God Who comes to us by His Word to show us our sin. It is He Who offers us grace and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ. It is He Who by His Holy

Spirit gives us that new start through Baptism. Through Baptism, we are united to Christ. Because Christ died for our sins, we are baptized into the death of sin with Him, that we may be raised to new life with Him.

Now our lives can be pleasing to God, like the soloist's second start. Not because of our work, but because of the power of God's gracious gift to us, Holy Baptism.

Stewardship

In the words of Rev. Waldo Werning: "Christian stewardship does not consist in raising money only, but in raising the people along with their money." The Apostle Paul put it this way: *"I seek not what is yours, but you"* (2 Corinthians 12:14). He was seeking much more than just a financial response. Stewardship should be seen as a whole-life response to God's grace, mercy, and love.



Paul did not hesitate to gather money in the church, but his emphasis was on motive, and his suggested method grew out of the motive. He showed that giving is a proposition of "hearts for God" rather than "purses for the church," of opening the heart through the Word rather than pulling at the billfold through emotional pleas. The heart of stewardship is the offering of the whole person.

Did You Know?

Only two people signed the declaration of independence on July 4th, John Hancock and Charles Thomson. Most of the rest signed on August 2, but the last signature was not added until 5 years later.

What is the only food that does not spoil? (honey)

What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laser printers have in common? (All were invented by women)

Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled “Gentlemen Only...Ladies forbidden” and thus the world GOLF entered in the English language.

Expressing Your Love

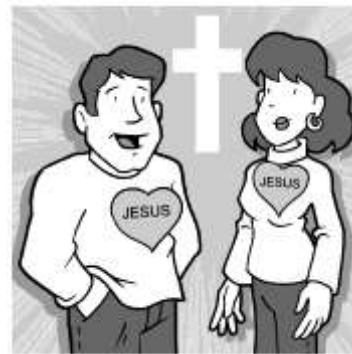
The three words “I love you” are powerful. Love is expressed not only in words but also in action. In fact, it has been said, “Talk is cheap.” To tell someone that you love him is good to do, but love expressed by what we do and how we act is even better! As God’s people, we convey love through our giving and serving.

In God’s Word, He tells us how much He loves each of us and then proves it by giving His Son to die for us. *“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). Jesus gave His life for us, and He keeps on giving. We respond to His love for us through our giving. When we give faithfully of our time, talents, and treasures, we show our love for Jesus.

God takes love seriously. He loves us, and He expects us to love one another. Jesus said, *“...love one another: just as I have*

loved you, you also are to love one another” (John 13:34). We love others by serving them. Serving communicates love. *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:45).

The love that Jesus places in our hearts can be our fuel to make a difference not only in our lives, but in the lives of those around us. It is important to express our love as we thank God for His abundant grace, mercy, and blessing, but our words must be supported through the greater expression of our love as seen through our giving and serving, as God gives us grace to do.



The New Person

A theme the Apostle Paul returns to often throughout his letters in the New Testament is that of putting off the Old Adam and putting on the New Self. Get rid of those things that are a hindrance to your life in Christ. *“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. And be thankful”* (Colossians 3:2, 15). Focusing on temporal problems, we tend to get bogged down. Setting our minds on things above, however, we cannot but be thankful for all God is and all He has done and continues to do for us in Christ.

Blessings on your Stewardship Journey!

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 or call the church office at 608-222-7071 or if you would like to become a part of our Prayer chain.

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

Sign Language Class:

Class meets every Wednesday at St. Paul beginning at 7 p.m. New and returning students are always welcomed to the class.

Portals of Prayer is a great little devotional book that you can use for daily reading. The *January to March 2025* issue has arrived and can be found on the tables in the Narthex and Welcoming Area. Feel free to take one home and/or share with a friend.

Loving and Losing:

We continue meeting on the second Monday of each month with a Bible study at 10:00 am for those that have lost a loved one—especially widows and widowers. We are discussing Kenneth C. Haugk's book *"Rebuilding & Remembering"*. We will meet again on Monday, January 13th with Pastor Nowak leading the group.

Any Changes??

Please let the church office know of any changes you may have in your phone number/s; email address/s; change of household dynamics; changed your name; or any information we need for the church directory. We would like to put out an updated directory at the beginning of 2025.

Monona General Fund Status
January 1 – November 30, 2024

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Income | |
| Weekly Offerings | 103,454 |
| Rental Income | 42,274 |
| Other | 1,750 |
| Total Income | 147,478 |
| Expenses | 162,718 |
| Net | (15,240) |

Volunteers Wanted:

Thank you to those who have signed up to volunteer. However, we could use a few more people to volunteer to be put on the schedule as an *usher, reader, assistant with communion or helping on the altar guild*. The more people we have, the less times you will be put on the schedule. Please consider volunteering.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Welcoming Area or call the church office (608-222-7071) with any questions anytime between 8 am and 1 pm; Monday, Wednesday or Thursday. Thanks.



There is also a new sign-up sheet to provide treats on Sunday mornings.

Partnership Monthly Event: Plan now to attend the next Partnership Game Night, **Tuesday, January 7th at Immanuel** with a meal beginning at 5:30 pm and games to follow. Please remember to sign up for this event in the Fellowship Hall so they can prepare accordingly.

Recipe for Daily Living

Ingredients:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 4 cups Love | Ephesians 4:2 |
| 5 cups Forgiveness | Colossians 3:13b |
| 2 cups Service | Isaiah 6:8b |
| 2 cups Fellowship | Hebrews 10:25 |
| 4 cups Encouragement | Galatians 6:12 & 1 Thessalonians 5:11 |
| 2 cups Song & Praise | Psalms 9:11 |
| 2 cups Hugs | Romans 6:16 |
| 3 cups Light | Matthew 4:14a; 5:16 |
| 2 cups Cheerful giver | 1 Corinthians 9:16 |

Line pan with:

- 5 Generous cups Evangelism Matthew 28:19

Mix together with:

- 6 cups of the Word of God Psalm 119:105

Bake well with the warmth of Christian Kindness and a Smile Matthew 4:14 and John 8:32

2025 Contribution Envelopes: Will you be needing more envelopes during 2025? If you need a new box of envelopes, please contact the church office of let Jeff Thur know.

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

JANUARY 2025

Divine Worship

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Communion Services

1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

Midweek Lenten & Advent

Vespers 6:00 p.m.

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 Others

Jesus tells us that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). When we love Jesus, we will love our neighbor (1 John 4:20). When we are not on good terms with God, as a rule, we will not be on good terms with other people.

God, Who creates right relationships, wants to get through to us that we avoid all prejudices, and more, that we love one another. Love causes those who have plenty to be in debt to every person who suffers want. Love sees those who are strong owing something to those who are weak. Love motivates those who have faith to share it with those who have none. Love challenges everyone who is well to want to bring healing to those who are sick. Only Christ's love has the capacity to fill the needs of those who lack one thing or another.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, help me to be more loving as You continually love me. Let Your love within me overflow to those around me. In Jesus' holy and precious name, I pray. Amen.*

Blessings on your journey as a steward!



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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