



'For God so loved the World that God gave God's one and only Son that whoever believes in him, might not perish but have eternal life.'

John 3:16

February I always think about Valentines Day and the love that we show others. We normally think about a special friend or a spouse but what about the love that God has shown us? What about sending Jesus to be our Savior? How strong or deep is God's love that God would send Jesus to walk on this earth and save us.

There are many expressions of love. In 2026 how will you thank God for the love shown us in Jesus Christ? Might you read your Bible a bit more or come to worship every Sunday or read a faith-based book or treat someone differently with love. There are many ways that you can show your thanks to God for this wonderful and amazing gift, you just have to expand on what you are already doing.

Into this world of sin and death and destruction, Jesus comes to save us from sin. That sin goes to the core of who we are and what we do. We have to have the power of God's love to deal with the sin that works to destroy us.

The Lenten Series for this year is 'Dying His Death, Living His Life.' It will help us look at the sins that work to destroy us. We will use Holden Evening Prayer as we walk the road to Jerusalem one more time. Please join us and let us walk together and understand better God's love for us.

In Christ,

Pastor Don

P.S. Thank you for all the Christmas gifts to the McKee's. We have been truly blessed to walk with you on this journey for all these years.



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February 2026

Newsletter of Our Savior's Lutheran
Church
Montevideo, MN · 320-269-8824

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LENT 2026: “Dying His Death, Living His Life”

Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on February 18th. During this season of Lent, we are reminded that we are buried with Christ in his death so that we might live with him in his resurrection. The old is gone. The new has come. Each day affords us a chance to die to self and to live for him.

Join us for worship services at 6:30 pm.



Please join us this year for our Lenten Suppers. They will be served each week from 5:15 to 6:15 pm. Worship will follow at 6:30 pm. We simply ask for a \$5.00 donation for our meal, all proceeds will go to help our youth attending Green Lake Bible Camp and the Youth Gathering to Omaha.

2/25 Meatballs/Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Carrots

3/04 Goulash/Garlic Breadstick

3/11 Scalloped Potatoes/Ham

3/18 Chicken Wild Rice Soup w/Crackers

3/25 Tator Tot Hotdish w/Beans & Dinner Roll

Thank You for Your Support!

1ST COMMUNION TRAINING – MARCH 4TH



First
Communion
Classes

We are going to have training for our

graders on **Wednesday, March 4th**, immediately following our Lenten Worship.

This will be for all 5th graders and any 6th graders that we may have missed.

It is a great time of learning. We ask each student to be there and at least one of your parents. We will meet in the Church Resource Room which is near Pastor Don's office.



Baptisms:

Lainey Delight Hiepler	11/16/2025
Avis Ann Verch	12/21/2025

Funerals:

Carol Diane Hadrath	12/13/2025
Julie Lynn Rhode	12/23/2025
Yvonne Pauline Ward	1/8/2026

HERITAGE HAVEN

New Year and the work continues. Thank you all for your gifts to help with this project. We hope that soon we can show you our progress.

Blessings to all who have given and blessings to those who are considering a gift.

God gave us the gift of a son, might your gift match that?



Wake up! God is calling you to joyful living.

This is how we are to live each day. Joyful living is a challenge in our world today. Only God can give you lasting Joy and lasting Peace.

Pray for Peace and Joy in 2026!!!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFTS!

We have many ways you can give. We offer auto-giving through your bank. Please contact Sue in the office to arrange for this to happen.

We have a drop-box outside the front door of Mason Hall. You may put your offering in an envelope and slip it in the slot.

We have online giving through Tithe.ly. Just scan the QR code here and it will take you to our page.

We have our regular offering envelopes that are sent to you bi-monthly for you to fill and bring to worship.

Finally, we have Pew Envelopes at the end of each pew for you to use during church. You can specify on that envelope where you want your special gift to go.

A huge thank you to our amazing volunteers for helping with the cleaning of the church during Dave's absence. Your time and effort mean a lot to us!

Ernie & Kathy Christianson	Brian & Lisa Schultz
Deb Koopman	Brooklynn Dahl
Jackie Freeman	Olivia Sachs
Chase Augeson	Cory Johnson

Aaron Enevoldsen

Lisa Clemenson
(friend of the congregation)



\$20 Each

Looking for tried-and-true comfort food? Our 2024 church cookbook is full of family recipes, and we have some available for purchase. Contact the church office at 269-8824.



February!

Growing up, I always thought February to be the coldest month of the year. The facts do not support that, however, so I'm left to wonder why that's what my impression was.

Maybe it's because we were past the anticipation of Christmas, and we were past the newness of the calendar, and maybe we were so ready for springtime to arrive, that it *felt* colder, even though it was not.

When I looked a little closer, I found that the average high in February was just as cold as January, but the nighttime lows no longer got as low.

Why does this matter? It only matters because it helps me to realize that sometimes, what we *know* to be true from experience sometimes isn't... What we *believe* about public figures sometimes isn't... Even what we *see* on the news—especially online news—sometimes isn't...

As you read this, it will be old news what was fresh as I wrote, that a woman in Minneapolis was shot by an agent of ICE. I've read diametrically opposed accounts of the incident, and right now, *I don't know* many details at all. What I do know, is that people with opposite

viewpoints are vilifying one another. We are calling each other stupid, naïve, and blind.

I am not very confident that people will suddenly switch sides in either direction, for we all know there is too much that we can't see, and too much that can be manipulated.

How do we move forward? How do we figure out how to love not only our neighbors, but our enemies? Only in Jesus Christ is this possible. Only through the eyes of faith is such love possible (in my experience). Let us trust in the one who dies for us to lead us through whatever life may bring.

In Jesus' name...

Pastor Michelle



YOUTH NEWS!

ROLL WITH JESUS

Every Wednesday Morning from 7-7:45am, we serve the High School Youth of our congregation.

We have a great line up of volunteers who are helping Lisa Schultz with this outreach.

Interested in helping? Let the office know and they will put you on the list.

WOW = Worship on Wednesdays

This is for our High School Youth. We begin with supper on Wednesdays at 7:00pm. Please encourage your high school youth to attend.



Looking to fill 7 spots on the
OSLC Mission Team for this year's service trip to Omaha
July 12th -17th 2026

*Mission work is not just about God's presence in our lives, but
about God's presence in our neighbors' lives.*

Mission Trip

Cost - \$ 550 (Scholarships available)
Contact Pam Baukol for details and to register.
612-309-2298

If you would like to sponsor a mission team members trip, contact the
church office at 269-8824

What's Happening at WOW?

- The WOW kids successfully turned a full roll of aluminum foil into a hard metal ball that resembles a shotput. This project took the work of the entire group, taking turns bringing the ball home to hammer away at it and then sand and polish it. "The Ball" will be on display in the narthex with a printout telling of the lesson it teaches. By trusting God and each other, working together and sticking to our faith, something extraordinary was created from the ordinary.
- The WOW kids have been granted the task of selecting a song from the ones they sing on Wednesday nights to be sung in worship on the last Sunday of each month. They read the scripture readings planned for the service and choose a related song and video lyrics to go with it.
- Items that we have used to pass the prayers around our prayer circle have included: hacky sack, pool noodle, a real football, a kick ball, a sponge, and our foil ball. What will we pass around this week?
- Many of the WOW kids volunteered to shop for Santa Anonymous. Eight Montevideo families were blessed by their willingness, and I bet it made the kids that did the shopping feel pretty good, too.

- The high schoolers talk about how they remember looking up to the "big kids" at church. They wanted to do something special to give a little greeting to the Sunday school age kids. They wrote a Christmas card and filled a treat bag that each SS kid received after the Christmas program.
- One Wednesday evening the youth room was turned into an Escape Room. The WOW kids had to solve Scripture related challenges to unlock a prize vault. The Picture Shows all the successful Escapees!



Warm Advent and Christmas greetings from the Ronneviks in PNG!

As we approach our second Christmas here in Lae, we are thankful to have been in our house at MLS for a whole year, we are thankful for a garden that produces green beans at Christmastime, and we are thankful for the knowledge gained last year about how to prevent Christmas cookies from melting before they even make it into the oven! As many missionaries and expats have noted before us, experiencing Christmas while serving outside one's home country often exposes our reliance on cultural, environmental, and social cues to get us in a "Christmas mood." Although it feels different from "normal" to anticipate Christmas in this context, I am reminded that throughout the world, no matter our circumstances or climate, we all wait for one and the same Savior, the One who offers us the only thing we actually need: Himself.



We've also started and finished Term 4 of the school year for both us and the kids. At the kids' school, one highlight was UN Day/World Children's Day in November. Hans and Bea wore their USA t-shirts and carried the flag in the parade with one other student from the U.S. Over the course of the past two terms, it was really neat to see the school work together to celebrate the heritage and traditions of their many PNG students (especially on PNG Independence Day in September), as well as the traditions of their international students.

Prayer Requests

Thanksgiving that I (Meredith) was able to get my phone back after it fell out of my pocket (or was pick-pocketed) at the market the other day. We pray also for the young men who "found" it, that they would know the abundance of God's grace and mercy to them. I certainly felt it to be an unexpected and undeserved gift that I received my phone back basically unharmed, in this case for a small price, of course.

Pray for smooth travels for Amanda and for us on our Australia trip and for good time together to be refreshed for the year ahead.

We lift up the ELC-PNG biennial synod taking place in Siassi at the end of January. Pray for safe travels for all who attend, for a good time of worship together as a



national church, for good communication and wisdom as the gathered group attends to the business of the church. Pray for a smooth start to the new MLS school year and for a good start to the new MTh program that Andrew has been a part of planning for. Pray that the many logistical pieces fall into place and all are ready when the students arrive the last week of January.

Thank you for all the emails, prayers, and caring thoughts that you send our way. You are a blessing to us.

God's peace to you.

Andrew, Meredith, Bea, and Hans

Church Council Corner/ Plain Talk: Is the light still Bright By: Ed Delf

Well, we're several weeks into the new year and I'm wondering if the glow of the holiday season is still as bright as you remember. It's another year and, for me, the old year has become just a cloudy memory most days. All of the memories, both good and not so good, are just that, memories. When I think back, I'm thankful that time tempers some of those memories. I'm optimistic that there's always a light at the end of the tunnel no matter how long the tunnel is.

The Christmas light, and what it means, may be a bit dimmer now, especially with Easter knocking at the door, but it still shines for us each and every day. I think the world's darkness and despair that we live with, sometimes clouds our vision, and makes us numb to the good around us.

As Christians, we celebrated the light of the Christmas star that heralded the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As Christians, we also anguish at the death of this same Savior on a cross a few years later. As I think about that dark time, I'm reminded that the light of His Resurrection overcame this darkness, and the Devil's power over us.

As I consider this, I know that I will have, and do have, days that even with the light, it's more like a night light in a big room. I can see, but the big picture just isn't always in focus. I must remind myself that, by God's Grace, I am saved and can have everlasting life.

At our Baptism, God tells us in Matt 5:16 "Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

This gift to us is meant to be shared. We are told in Mark 16:15 "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." While you may not be able to travel the world, you can make a difference right here where you live. After all, sharing and caring begins at home and moves on from there, so it doesn't get much easier than that.

So, even though Christmas is a fading memory, the light of the star, and what it means, still shines brightly. We're not really asked to do so much to thank God for His gift, just tell others about it so they too might experience the light of the Christmas season, any time of year.

In a nutshell, do what you can to share God's gift of love, along with all of the gifts that God has entrusted you with. After all, we need to remember, what we have is just on temporary loan, and which we will all be accountable for one day.

How would you answer when asked if you did your best with the gifts you were entrusted with? Will your light shine for others or will it be more like that night light in a big room?

February 19, 2026

11:00 am Entertainment by Guy Stevermer

Followed by our Noon meal

Menu

Chicken Gordon Bleu
Wild Rice



Santa Anonymous

The Montevideo Santa Anonymous program dates back more than 50 years! Though I don't know the exact origination, I do know that Dixie Tilden started as a "shopper" for SA in 1976 and then became chairman for many years to follow. Sara Smith took over as chairman in 2014, followed by Jayme Winter in 2017. Alongside these leading ladies were devoted

Senior Lites Valentine Event

“shoppers”, many of whom shopped for Santa Anonymous annually for many years.

The generous, and many times repeat, monetary donations by community members, churches, school organizations and businesses have been the reason that the program has been able to provide parents, who otherwise could not, give Christmas gifts to their children.

The program is titled Santa Anonymous because the names of recipient families, the shoppers, and the donors all remain unknown to one another. Chippewa County Family Services sends letters to over 200 area families. If the family sends back their children’s wish list, Family Services assigns them a number and sends their numbered wish list (no names) to the SA coordinator. Shoppers are given these wish lists, which tell of the children’s ages, genders, clothing sizes, and gift requests. Shoppers purchase gifts within a certain budget per child, bag the unwrapped gifts and label the bag with the family’s number and return it to Family Services. Family Services hosts a bag pick up day for the parent(s) to come for the gifts. At no point is it about anyone other than the children receiving gifts from their parent(s) on Christmas.

In November 2025, Our Savior’s took over as the fiscal agent for Montevideo Santa Anonymous. The program needed a home-base, a “parent” organization, in order to smartly continue its work. Our church council felt that blessing local children as Santa Anonymous has for all of the 50 plus years, fit our mission, and wanted to support the continuation of the program.

A late season take over made for some quick learning for me as the new coordinator, but Santa Anonymous 2025 was again a wonderful widespread display of living as Jesus taught us.

84 Families returned their wish lists, which resulted in 274 children in our community receiving special, personal gifts for Christmas. The funds to make these Christmas wishes come true came from anonymous monetary donations given throughout the year.

Going forward, Santa Anonymous monetary donations can be brought or mailed to the Montevideo Co-Op Credit Union or Our Savior’s Lutheran Church office, anytime throughout the year. I’m asking for your help in spreading the word as to where people can send their donations, for this is a change that was made from past years.

The photo I’m including shows the bag drop off room at Family Services. Angie with Family Services, hands out the bags to parents on pick up day. She wanted all of us to know that the parents are so appreciative. We can all imagine what it means to them to be able to give Christmas gifts to their kids. It’s all for the kids.

Thank you, Our Savior’s, for backing Santa Anonymous!
-Pam Baukol, Montevideo Santa Anonymous Coordinator

