

Why Is Being a Church Member Important?

When I was growing up in the 60's and 70's, going to church was a way of life. Over 70% of church members regularly attended church. Close to 85% of Americans claimed membership in a Christian church. Now both of those numbers have dropped significantly. What's the difference? There's more to do? We're busier today? The church doesn't offer what I need? The church is full of hypocrites.

While those statements hold partial truth, many of those reasons have just become excuses for us. The fact remains that we believe and teach the importance of regularly attending church. We continue to strongly encourage people to become members of a local church. But, why is it important? What is the Biblical understanding of what it means to be part of the body of Christ?

Sometimes we join our churches expecting others to serve us, to feed us, and to care for us.

We don't like hypocrites in the church, but we fail to see our own hypocrisies.

God did not give us local churches to become country clubs where membership means we have privileges and perks.

He placed us in churches to serve, to care for others, to pray for leaders, to learn, to teach, to give, and, in some cases, to die for the sake of the gospel. Church is the place where believers can love one another, (1 John 4:12) encourage one another, (Hebrews 3:13) "spur" one another to love and good works, (Hebrews 10:24) serve one another, (Galatians 5:13) instruct one another, (Romans 15:14) honor one another, (Romans 12:10) and be kind and compassionate to one another. (Ephesians 4:32)

When a person trusts Jesus Christ for salvation, he or she is made a member of the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:27) For a church body to function properly, all of its "body parts" need to be present and working. (1 Corinthians 12:14-20) It's not enough to just attend a church; we should be involved in some type of ministry to others, using the spiritual gifts God has given us. (Ephesians 4:11-13) A believer will never reach full spiritual maturity without having that outlet for his gifts, and we all need the assistance and encouragement of other believers. (1 Corinthians 12:21-26)

We will explore the Biblical understanding of church membership, as well as the necessity of using one's gifts and time to build up the body of Christ, in our worship services throughout this fall. In a series which began September 23, we are focusing on our church membership with the help of a book written by Thom S. Rainer, *"I Am a Church Member."* You will also have the opportunity to assist us in creating a new member covenant which we will contribute to each week, and at the end we will all be encouraged to sign that covenant created by all of us.

Starting the weekend of October 21 we will begin a series entitled, *"Finding Your PLACE in Life and Ministry."* We will take a look at how God has wired us humanly and spiritually as we look at our personalities, spiritual gifts, abilities, passions and life experiences, and how we can use those to serve God and others through the church. Current members and potential new members will be given the opportunity to fill out instruments and inventories to help you find a place to serve God joyfully and effectively here in this church and in the community.

I hope you can join us each and every week. You belong here!

Connecting People to Jesus,

Pastor Jon

Compassionate Friends

By Marcy Weight

Members of Compassionate Friends meet monthly to offer Christian love, hope, strength and companionship to:



- ◆ Cope with a recent diagnosis of cancer
- ◆ Meet the daily challenges of a chronic disease or terminal illness
- ◆ Encourage a neighbor, family member or friend suffering from a diagnosis of an acute disease
- ◆ Offer hope to you as a survivor

The next meeting for Compassionate Friends will meet in the Bookstore at Mount Olive on October 8 at 1:00 PM. This support group is open to everyone who has gone through or is going through an illness. Call Marcy at 763.755.6368 for more information.

Stephen Ministry

By Dave Dawson

People often ask, "What exactly is a Stephen minister?" One way to put it is that Stephen Ministers are the after people.

Stephen ministers are there:

- After the phone call you hoped you'd never get.
- After the divorce papers are served and the bottom falls out of your life. After the funeral when everyone has left and the emotions you've held at bay come crashing in on you.
- After the doctor says, "I'm sorry but there's nothing more we can do."
- After the last child honks the horn, waves and drives away and the house suddenly seems empty.
- After the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, "Welcome to your new home."
- After the gavel goes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
- After the baby arrives, demanding more of you than you ever dreamed possible.
- After you find a pink slip with your final paycheck.
- After your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Stephen ministers are the "AFTER PEOPLE." They are ready to come alongside you or your friends, neighbors, coworkers or relatives and provide comfort and support for as long after as needed. Do you or someone you know need some one-on-one Christian care? It's strictly confidential so don't suffer alone! Give the gift of a Stephen minister.

Welcome - Life

By Randy Stroming

What is our purpose in life? That is a good question. To understand the impact is to understand the perseverance of how we live and what we live for. Everyone wants to be seen as important and valuable. We want to make an impact in our community and family. We want others to see us as good. So what we do and what we say is important. We run our race of life as scripture calls us to do.

"I do all this to make the Good News known. I do it so that I can share in the blessings of the Good News. You know that in a race all the runners run, but only one runner gets the prize. So run like that. Run to win!"

I don't know about you but when I would run races I would get tired and my body would begin to give me signals (pain) to say stop. My mind would start with "this will be ok" but then as the steps would mount up, my whole self would begin to say, "please stop!"

Many of us live life today with a vicious focus, by running hard and taking on many things. We want to be responsible and not seen as lazy or a sluggard. With job, family, hobby, church and community things to juggle, we can begin to burn out.

What is important as we run the race of life is to see what is important in life. Scripture tells us to run to the prize. Run to win! Winning for Christians is seeing *"Jesus as the author and perfecter of our faith."* (Hebrews 12:2) It means that Christ has created our faith and He will watch over it, care for it and sustain it. He will sustain us in our daily walk and help us finish of our spiritual journey. In Philippians 3:14, Paul wrote, *"I keep running hard toward the finish line to get the prize that is mine because God has called me through Christ Jesus to life up there in heaven."*

Our purpose is to live life to the fullest. It means aiming at the one thing that is important and living every day in that focus. That does not mean that we will live everything in life to the fullest, *"If we aim at everything we will hit nothing,"* Philippians 3:15-16. All of us who have grown to be spiritually mature should think this way too. And if there is any of this that you don't agree with, God will make it clear to you. But we should continue following the truth.

Christian life is a race but not a sprint. There will be times that we fall and collapse and need rest. But we get up again and keep living. It means we live Christ in everything until we reach the finish line.



WELCOME

By Pastor Randy Stroming

Life+ Bible Study Opportunities

SUNDAY OFFERINGS:

Wide Angle Framing your Worldview

The eight-week study by Rick Warren and Chuck Colson.

Your worldview consists of the beliefs you build your life on. It determines how you view God, yourself and other people. It includes your thoughts about life and death, good and evil, pain and suffering, the past, the present, the future. It determines how you think about relationships, your time and your money. Everything you think about life is shaped by your worldview.

Session One: My Worldview Matters

Session Two: How Do We Know What's True?

Session Three: Where Did We Come From?

Session Four : It is a Messed Up World?

Session Five: What's the Solution?

Session Six: What Do I Do Now?

Come join us in Cana Hall at 9:15-10:15 AM for coffee, fellowship and Bible study.

Highlighted Verses Bible Study: This Bible study focuses on specific verses (from Genesis to Revelation) that people have highlighted (as having special significance) in their Bibles. The study meets in the second floor Meeting Room at 9:00 AM during the Sunday morning education period. Participation is required. The goal is to develop confidence in sharing one's faith with others. Participation has resulted in great discussions and sharing.

Small groups, such as LIFE groups, may want to add this type of study to their group's activities. Sharing the highlighted verses provides others to describe the impact God's word have on their lives. It can generate all kinds of emotions and feelings. The results are amazing. I would encourage each small group to try this type of study and sharing.

Also, as individuals you can go through your Bible and copy your highlighted verses in one document. It is very interesting to see in a few pages all that you have considered significant to highlight. You will be amazed at the consistency in the Bible and in what you have highlighted. It is also provides an opportunity to reconnect with God and yourself.

If there are any questions contact Jim Rootes at farmalldork@gmail.com.

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Tuesday Women's Bible Study will be meeting at 10:30 AM in Room 1115/ Bookstore. We are doing a study on the Old Testament prophetic book of Isaiah, "The Gospel of the Old Testament."

We'd love for you to join us for prayer, fellowship and the study of God's Word. Contact Karen Albu at 763.432.7652 or karenalbu@comcast.net or Chris Schomburg at Chrisschomburg@gmail.com with any questions.

"Sometimes we look at our lives or our world and wonder what good could possibly come out of it. That's exactly what we find in the book of Isaiah. Here you'll see how the prophet raises a cry for revival in the midst of a rotting society. And you'll find comfort for your own troubled times."

Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Study meets at 6:00 AM in the Coffee Shop. Contact Jeff Paschke at 763.427.5539.

Wednesday Morning Women's Bible Study meets from 6:00 - 7:00 AM in the Room 1115/Bookstore by the Coffee Shop. We are studying the Armor of God from Ephesians 6. Our next study will be "A Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel. Anyone interested in joining, contact Paulette Lenz at mp.lenz@gmail.com.

In the Word Bible Study: This Bible study continues in the Book of Isaiah. The method we are using for this study is to listen to a dramatization reading of Isaiah and then follow-up discussion. We completed the study through Chapter 24. This Bible Study meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM until 8:00 PM. Contact Jim Rootes at farmalldork@gmail.com.

By Pastor Jon Haakana

Top Ten Reasons Why People Don't Read the Bible Regularly

I don't know about you, but I like reading top ten lists. In the spiritual realm, they can be helpful identifying positive or negative reasons for trends, patterns or tendencies in the church.

With that in mind, I would offer a top 10 list thinking about how much time we spend or don't spend in God's Word. We all know that reading the Bible is important, but at times we find it difficult to get into a regular pattern of reading the Scripture. At Mount Olive we have used programs like *Read through the Bible* and *The Story* as means to get people into the Word. So I ask you: How's your Bible? Is it dusty or well-worn with lots of use? What are your struggles in reading it daily? Chances are good that one of the following reasons resonates with you:

10. **I don't have time** - we always make time for what's most important to us.
9. **I don't know where to start** - having a good Bible reading plan makes all the difference.
8. **Reading makes me sleepy** - this is true for many people - try switching times and locations - pace if you need to!
7. **The Bible is too confusing** - it can be, but it doesn't have to be! Anything is confusing when you're not familiar with it - commit to spending a month reading it daily and you'll be much less confused!
6. **I never get anything out of it** - if you go to the Bible to "get something" you might consider changing your motivation - pray before, asking God to open your eyes that you might hear from Him - approach the Bible looking for application - put what you read into practice - that's where the reward comes!
5. **There are many contradictions in the Bible** - show me five and then we'll talk!
4. **The Bible is boring** - there are 'challenging' parts - here's a tip: picture what you're reading - if it were a movie, what would it look like? If it were a painting, how would it look?
3. **I might have to change** - you probably will have to change! This is the most difficult aspect of Bible reading - it challenges your beliefs and lifestyle! But the wisdom of God and His love for you assures you that change is good.
2. **I forget or I get distracted** - if you find your mind wandering, press on - this usually only lasts for a short time - if you can get past a few minutes, your mind will engage.
1. **I'm not smart enough** - I often ask people who pose this reason, "Did you have to read or memorize things for school or work?" Everyone does! There are even Bible CD's, and mp3's available for those who learn better that way. We have enough mental capacity to grasp God's Word, we often just lack motivation! If it was your favorite hobby, you would overcome any of these barriers easily. Admit that you lack desire, stop making excuses, and get in to God's Word!

Here are just a few hints: Start small – just take a chapter or part of a chapter each day. Take advantage of online resources such as www.biblegateway.com or www.esvonline.org. Get a daily Bible reading plan. Check out www.heartlight.org, google "Bible reading plans," or look up Bible study apps for your phone. Hope this helps! God bless your reading!

Join us Sundays for this 8-Session Bible Study

Cana Hall 9:15 – 10:15 AM

A worldview shapes how you think about the World, make Decisions, and take Action. Everybody has a Worldview. Do you know yours?

NEW DVD Bible Studies added to the Mount Olive Library ready for you to check out:

Awesome - Building Great Relationships Better Together (What on Earth are we Here For?)

Christians in the Workplace

Daring Faith

Everything is Possible

External Realities

Forty Days of Community

Forty Days in the Word

Forty Days in the Word

God's Answers to Life's Difficult Questions

Great Chapters of the Bible (Romans - Chapter 8)

How to get through What you are Going Through

The Miracle of Mercy

Passover: Lord's Supper Celebration

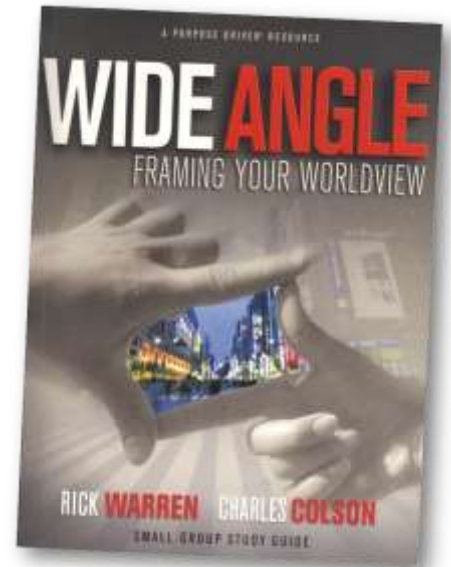
The Purpose of Christmas

Purpose Driven Church

Raising Kids with Raising your Blood Pressure

S.H.A.P.E. (Finding and Fulfilling your Unique Purpose for Life)

You Make Me Crazy - Surviving Relationships God's Way



Work Ministry Focus - Stewardship

By Jon Holtz

In the June Vision meeting I shared that we are close to stabilizing our church budget. Not only that, but personally I am blown away at the miracle that has happened in our midst. Within one year, Mount Olive (that means you!), we have managed to come close to replenishing needed funds.

So where are we (if you haven't heard) — we are about 50k short. In addition, we have close to a half million dollars in church repairs coming in the form of parking lots, roof repairs, HVAC repair replacement, and carpet replacement that needs to be addressed in the next couple of years. So we need to continue to encourage each other and take advantage of LCEF, Thrivent, Amazon Smile, and SCRIP cards.

I am writing this article because 59% of church's in America have shown a decrease in giving and we are apart of the 41% to see an increase. But as a whole, as you well know, MANY do not tithe or are spotty at best. Did you know that to those that DO tithe they are better off financially than those that do not? A study by www.stateoftheplate.com found these figures to your right (see graphic):

God wants us to be good stewards of our money. He wants us to handle it correctly so we may be blessed. We as Christian's need to take advantage of the Mount Olive providing sound financial teaching for our personal budgets.

One of the largest area's of growth is with the younger generations (meaning 18-49 years hold). Many in this demographic struggle with this concept and have desires to tithe but for one reason or another have not followed through.

Please take time if you are a great-grandparent, grandparent, parent, or friend of another young person to encourage them - *God is faithful!* (Malachi 3:10) If they have troubles, please tell them about our financial class coming in January and even these tools below.

If you are apart of this generation and have not worshipped the Lord in this blessing — come join the fun!!

Blessings!

Jon Holtz

10 MILLION "TITHERS" give \$50+ BILLION & "TITHERS" ARE BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY

www.STATEofthePLATE.info Research from 5,444 Christians in all 50 states & 70+ countries

| | CHRISTIAN TITHERS* | CHRISTIAN NON-TITHERS |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Are Debt-free | 28% | 13% |
| Owe on a mortgage | 52% | 66% |
| Are making car payments | 26% | 38% |
| Credit cards bills >30 days | 20% | 40% |
| Have debts of \$2500 to \$50K | 36% | 41% |
| Have debts over \$50K | 15% | 25% |
| Have Assets/Estate - \$250K+ | 58% | 46% |
| Donate to 5+ places | 52% | 37% |
| Have a will/estate plan | 71% | 57% |

*Tithers also give 10% or more to their church and Christian charitable organizations whether they consider themselves "tithers" or not. Some estimates 1% of Americans tithe. This equals 10 MILLION people donating more than \$10 BILLION dollars annually. 12% of 18-year-old Christians tithe.

PS: If you are planning on "flying south" for the winter, or if you ever forget your checkbook or envelopes, no worries, GIVE+ is here to help.

Give + 5 Tools for Giving (located in the pew)

1. Give+ Mobile App
2. Give+ Text by texting 763.324.9754
3. Give+ Online through our webpage: www.mtolive-anoka.org/onlinegiving.html
4. Give+ at the Welcome Desk
5. Give+ Simply Giving (as it has been available all this time)



WORLD

Witness - Manna Market


By Kristin Bradley

On September 21, thanks to our wonderful volunteers, we served 117 families and had a total of 244 service hours. If your Bible study group, L.I.F.E. group, family or confirmation student would like to try out Manna Market, it is the 3rd Friday of every month. Contact Ardie Waldo at ardis.waldo@gmail.com to sign up!



Volunteer Highlight: Guest and Volunteer Registration - these servants register our guests and make sure our volunteers have a place where they can serve. And they are sporting our new T-Shirts!


 Mt. Olive Lutheran Church
Trunk or Treat
and
Fall Carnival
 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28TH - 4:30-6:30PM

CARNIVAL GAMES

BOUNCE HOUSE
CANDY *concessions*
 &  **Cake Walk**
PRIZES **Crafts**


WEAR YOUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY COSTUME

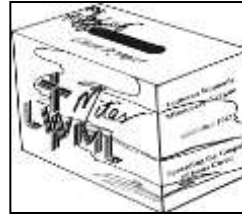

700 Western Street *Anoka*

Witness Ministry Focus - WOMO

By Jan Block



LWML ONLINE: National website is www.lwml.org. Many of you use your email, text and other tech items on a daily basis. Check on the www.mnslwml.org and see all the many things that come up. There are items for ministries, events and resources.



This is for the MN South District. Also, check our LWML table on the way to Cana Hall. It has several items for your use. There are Quarterlies, Mite Boxes and calendars that can be used to help fill your mite boxes. Encourage children to use them also.

There will NOT be an October meeting of the Women of Mount Olive. The next meeting will be on Monday, November 5 at 1:00 PM in Cana Hall.

Fall is here! Keep in mind our Fall Event on Saturday, October 13 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Come and enjoy some delicious soup, and/or tasty sandwich, extras and PIE!! Check to see if volunteers are still needed.

You still have time to do some baking for our Bake Sale. Homemade breads, cakes, candies, pies, bars, cookies, and even some canned items and/or preserves will be available. Please try to bring items for the Bake Sale to Room 1115/Bookstore area by 8:00 AM that morning.

Our Christian greeting cards will also be there for purchase.

This is our moneymaking event for WOMO. The more donations we have, the more gifts we can share for our mission work.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Annual Fall Event

Saturday, October 13

at Mount Olive Lutheran Church



Lunch/Bake Sale and Craft Fair

Craft Fair & Bake Sale : 9:00 AM- 3:00 PM

Soup or Sandwich Lunch w/ Pie: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Registration forms available at the Welcome Desk.



PIES! PIES! PIES!

Pie help is needed!!

The Fall Luncheon will again be offering a variety of pies.

Check for your favorite recipe.

Sign-up sheets are located in the Welcome Center.

WITNESSES

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Youth & Family

By Marla & Carol



Trunk or Treat is right around the corner! All ages are invited to participate on October 28 at 4:30 PM. No better way to spend a fall day than greeting the families of our church and community. We always need more decorated trunks, as well as **donations of candy and prizes for games, or if it's easier, cash donations are accepted as well.** This event reaches out to approximately 700+ people from our church and our community.

Watch for information coming soon!

"The Best Example"

Who has ever sat in church wishing your kids were behaving like the kids in front of you instead of squirming, whispering, or just generally doing what you wish they wouldn't? **I know we have had plenty of those mornings ourselves. And while there is the occasion that I have to take my child out to "remind" them that everyone in church can see what they are doing, most of the time their squirminess is noticeable only by me. And really, WORSHIP time is just that...time to be worshipping and bringing praises to our God. It's for ALL of us. It's time set apart where we can come together to focus our hearts and minds upwards to God. The Holy Spirit is moving in that worship time, and even if kids don't get all of what's being said, God is at work in their hearts.**

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these".

That's a pretty clear message. Worship with your kids. Bring them into that Holy time between you and God. Yes, as parents we need to teach our kids manners, and appropriate behavior, but MOST important is to teach them the value of a relationship with Jesus, and part of that relationship is to learn to spend time in worship praising Him. The best way you can instill that value is by doing it, and letting them SEE you do it. Don't leave your kids out of this valuable experience because it's easier than getting them to sit. Instead, do a little whispering yourself and explain to them what's happening. Draw them into the experience, and know that God doesn't expect perfect behavior, just time with you, and your children.

Upcoming Events

October 12-14: Jr Youth at Camp Forest Springs

October 17: No Youth

October 28: Trunk or Treat at 4:30 PM

October 31: Youth & Family at Feed My Starving Children

November 21: No Youth

November 26: No Sunday School

November 30-December 2: Senior Youth Retreat/Wilderness

For more information
please contact:

Marla Chesser
Senior Youth
Family Events

763-421-7156 x117
marla@mtolive-anoka.org

Carol Kietzman
Sunday School
(PreK-Grade 6)

Junior Youth
763-421-7156 x107
carol@mtolive-anoka.org

Upcoming Events

October 12-14: Junior Youth at Camp Forest Springs

October 13: Annual Fall Event/Artisan Craft
Sale/Lunch/Bake Sale

October 17: No Youth

October 19: Manna Market

October 28: Trunk or Treat

October 29 - November 2: Meals on Wheels

October 31: Youth & Family at Feed My
Starving Children



Saturday Night Service 5:30 PM
(contemporary service)

Sunday Worship Services:

Classic Grace: 8:00 AM
(traditional service)

Living Praise: 9:30 AM
(contemporary service)

Living Praise: 10:30 AM
(contemporary service)