



# MEMORIAL MESSENGER

## January 2025

**Thomas D. Kock**

It was about a 20-hour trip to reach our summer vacation destination. Since the kids were young, it made more sense to drive through the night while they slept.

I listened to tapes, slurped down coffee (but not too much so I wouldn't have to stop), and munched on sunflower seeds. Sometimes I'd slap myself to drive away the sleepiness, or I sat up straight in the driver's seat. My eyes were often bleary.

But then would come the sunrise. As its warming rays streaked the sky, the countryside was more and more revealed. Energy crept back into me. Somehow, it didn't matter that I'd been driving all night. The sun was shining!

### **The wounding darkness of sin**

There's something about a sunrise, isn't there? Maybe you've experienced the all-nighter and the refreshing rise of the sun. Maybe you're an early morning riser and see the sun rise regularly. Either way, for many of us it's energizing and encouraging.

Perhaps that's why God chose to use that imagery near the end of the book of Malachi: "But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings" ([Malachi 4:2](#)). That "sun of righteousness" is Jesus, the Son. And what does Jesus bring? He brings healing!

And isn't that what I need as I enter a new year? I have so many wounds from the year past. Some of those wounds came from others, I struggled with health issues or job losses or relationship struggles. Unfortunately, way too many of those wounds were self-inflicted, the results of my own sinful thoughts, words, and deeds.

Oh, how I struggle! Oh, how I make a mess out of so much!

And it hurts! Sin can bring horrible results, either for me or for those around me—or both. Sometimes it hurts more, sometimes less, but it always hurts. It always wounds.

Thank God it does! If it didn't hurt, we'd be even more tempted to live in rebellion against God, walking down the road to hell. Thank God that sin wounds us!

But even as I thank God for the wounds, they're still wounds. And the wounds drain energy from me, similar to how the all-night drive through darkness drained my energy.

### **The healing light of forgiveness**

Take heart, brothers and sisters; it's sunrise time again! We've just celebrated Jesus' birth; he came to this world because sinners needed forgiveness. And he won that forgiveness for sinners like you and me. With that forgiveness comes healing. Jesus' death and resurrection assure us that forgiveness for ALL sin has been won. Those sins that were committed last year? They're forgiven. Jesus won that forgiveness. And the sins that were committed last month? They're forgiven too! What about the sins that were committed last week? Yesterday? An hour ago? They're all forgiven. God still loves us! He always will.

Hearing that is oh, so healing! Kind of like feeling the warm, bright rays of the sun as it rises after a long, cold, dark night.

May the Son shine brightly upon you in 2025! And may he bring wonderful healing in his wings.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE** This year our New Year's Eve worship is a joint service with the Lansing area churches, held at Zion @ 6:30pm.

**LADIES FELLOWSHIP** will meet on *Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am* to take down the Christmas decorations.

**INVITATION** Emanuel First Lutheran (Lansing) has invited Memorial to their upcoming event: They are holding a Men's 18+ 3 on 3 basketball tournament on Jan 18<sup>th</sup>. You can join as a team or as an individual.



**Here's how you can get involved:**

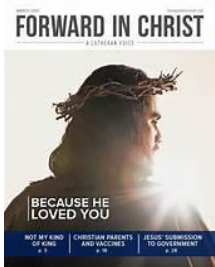
- **Sign Up a Team:** Gather your friends and family to form a team! The cost is **\$40 per person.** (4 person teams)
  - **Volunteer:** We need volunteers to help make the event run smoothly. Your time and support are greatly appreciated!
  - **Come Watch:** Even if you're not playing or volunteering, we'd love for you to come watch and cheer on the teams!

We hope to see you there!  
Parents of Emanuel

**SCHEDULES** The 2025 schedules for cleaners, greeters, counters, and playlist have been distributed and posted on the bulletin board (if applicable). Thank you to all who volunteer for our church, your time and efforts are very much appreciated. We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated group of volunteers who give so freely of their time and talents.

**THE FLOWER CHART** FOR 2025 has been posted on the bulletin board. You are invited to sign up to place flowers on the altar for any Sunday. If you wish, you may also indicate the occasion for which the flowers are being donated

**YOUR 2025** envelopes are ready and have been placed on a table in the narthex for you to pick up.



**DO YOU WISH TO RENEW OR BEGIN** a new subscription to *Forward in Christ?* FIC is our Wisconsin Synod's monthly magazine. Subscription price is just **\$12.60 (slight increase)** for twelve issues.

Please use your offering packet envelope for *Forward in Christ* (or a plain envelope labeled "FIC" and your name. Please enclose a check for \$12.60, payable to Memorial Ev. Lutheran Church or that amount in cash and place in thankoffering plate by January 26<sup>th</sup>.

**USE OF CHURCH/SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT:** We remind you that members of the congregation may make use of our spacious school grounds, our tables and chairs, and our fellowship hall for picnic and family gatherings.

Please contact Todd Loeffler (517-243-7349) to request a reservation of a facility and/or equipment.

# CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

## BOARD OF ELDERS

Our annual December door offering will be sent to support the WELS Christian Aid Relief. The usher schedule for 2025 has been prepared and distributed.

## BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP

Will continue to have the smaller 1 Sunday a month refreshments after the service for 2025  
We will continue to do the monthly/quarterly after service announcements.  
We plan to show WELS connection on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, when we can

## BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Total enrollment: 33 (unchanged)

Days school closed for weather / no power / illness / other: 5

A review of WELS teachings will be highly encouraged for non-member school families, we plan to offer 2 classes in January and offer a sign up at the January PTO meeting.

## SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR JANUARY SERVICES:

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Playlist</u>	<u>Greeter(s)</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
1/05	A. Rusnak, P. Jantos	Robin Olin	K. Remus	Steve Houser	Janecke (6-11)
1/12	T. Loeffler, J Zoran	Mary Ann Groop	C. Lycos	Dianne Steiner	Klaerner(13-18)
1/19	D. Rector, K. Remus	Sheryl Arnston	Nancy Hart	Kathy Ward	Leitz (20-25)
1/26	Fisher, Crandall, B. Janecke	Kathy Ward	J. Coulter	P & S Crandall	Muscott(27-01)