



MEMORIAL MESSENGER

February 2024

A Forward in Christ article by Peter A. Panitzke, Volume 107, Number 03

Ashes are smeared on the forehead or hand. Tears well up in my eyes and the eyes of others.

“Dust you are and to dust you will return” ([Genesis 3:19](#)).

The line is long. It stretches from our altar, around the world, and across 10 centuries. Since the 900s, Christians have lined up on Ash Wednesday to receive this symbol of mortality. The ashes indicate the confession of men, women, and children: “Adam and Eve chose death, and so have I.”

“Dust you are and to dust you will return.”

Yet there is hope in this somber moment. Those smudged ashes are from last year’s Palm Sunday palm fronds. The Son of David chose death that day. The crowds didn’t know it; the King did. He did not choose death by sinning. He chose death by loving. He loved the crowds who loved him. He loved his enemies who hated him. Jesus chose death willingly for us.

The King stands with us in the long line. “Dust you are and to dust you will return.”

But Jesus breaks the pattern! Jesus’ story did not end in dust. God had foretold that his body would not see decay ([Psalm 16:10](#)). His body would rise triumphant from the grave. “After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied” ([Isaiah 53:11](#)).

By receiving the sign of the cross, we confess that we will die, but we also claim Jesus’ victory for ourselves. We confess with Job: “I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my own flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another” ([Job 19:25-27](#)).

The smudged ashes announce that our story also does not end in the dust of death. Just as Jesus’ body came out of the grave, so shall ours.

Death is changed to a sleep from which we shall awaken—refreshed, new, joyful, without a care in the world. With Job we cry out, “How my heart yearns within me!” ([Job 19:27](#)).

“Dust you are and to dust you will return.”

The smudged Ash Wednesday crosses on our foreheads are often faint or lopsided. Isn’t that a symbol too? They are imperfect. We are still imperfect here. We look forward to life and joy as Job did.

That’s why we gather during the Lenten season. Watch carefully the events of Holy Week. See the King choose death for you. In spirit, go to the tomb to see that his body did not become dust. Claim the victory of the cross again.

“Pastor, dip your thumb into the ashes again. Trace that sign of the cross once more on my forehead or my hand. Let me treasure it in my heart as well.”

Receive the sign of the cross this Lenten season.

LENT is a valuable time for God's people to focus on Christ and his suffering and death. That's the essential element of Lent. Lent sharpens our focus on what God has given to us through the cross of Christ. We will be worshipping this Lenten season with Wednesday evening, midweek services at 7:00PM, beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. The PTO is sponsoring a dinner at 6:00PM, prior to the Ash Wednesday worship service. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board so we can get a count of attendees.

DIVINE CALL EXTENDED The Holy Spirit, working through the voters of our congregation, has called Pastor Chadwick Graham to serve as pastor of Memorial Ev. Lutheran. Pastor Graham currently serves as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church and School in Oshkosh, WI. We ask the Lord to be with Pastor Graham, his wife, and their two children as he prayerfully considers the two divine calls that he now has.



INVITATION from Emanuel First (Lansing) for their 1st annual Chili Cookoff. There is a flyer posted on the bulletin board with a QR code to scan. The event will be held on February 9th from 5:30-9pm. There will be awards for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners as well as a larger trophy to be displayed at the 1st place winners home church!

Admission and Chili tasting is a free will donation, which will go to the Parents of Emanuel Fund. The funding is used for events to bring the Lansing WELS churches together and enhance learning experiences for the children of these churches and students of Emanuel. Kids meals of hot dog, chips, drink and dessert will be available for \$2.

In addition to tasting all the amazing chili there will be prizes and donated goody baskets to win as well as Bingo!

Bingo will run during the event from 6:30pm-8:30pm or prizes run out! Bingo will be \$1 a card or \$5 for 3 cards per round. Rounds are 25 minutes or 15 bingos. If time runs out in the middle of a game with no Bingo called we will continue that game until there is a Bingo.

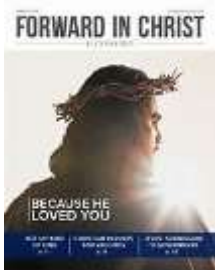
If you would like to donate any items or goodies for prizes please reach out to Monica Torrey 517.402.0088 or Mtorey427@gmail.com. A volunteer sign up for set up, clean up and Bingo will be sent out later.



VOTERS MEETING RESULTS At the Quarterly Voters Meeting, January 23rd, the voters approved an upgrade to the church's sound system, naming Judy Domke as acting school principal, guest organists will receive \$75 per service, and transfer the membership of Pastor and Laurie Voss to Emanuel First Ev. Lutheran in Lansing.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP will meet on *Monday, February 5th at 10:00am*. We will set our agenda and choose our Mission recipients from our winter fundraiser. Please join us!

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 \$12.00 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 \$12.00, payable to Memorial Ev. Lutheran Church or that amount in cash and place in thankoffering plate.

PICTURES REQUESTED The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship is working on a new church directory. We kindly ask members to submit a family photo. You can do so by texting your photo to Karl Remus at 517-490-6208, sending your photo via email at remuskarl77@outlook.com, or by asking Karl, Joe Janecke, or Jason Leitz to take a photo for you at church.

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

BOARD OF ELDERS--The Board of Elders organized as follows: Chairman - Steve Houser, Secretary - Bob Briggs, Head Usher – vacant.

Nancy Hart has offered to play organ one Sunday a month for us possibly beginning in February. We thank Nancy for offering to use her God given talents to beautify our worship services.

Ash Wednesday is February 14th. We will have an Ash Wednesday worship service that day at 7:00 pm as well as Lenten services at 7:00 pm the following Wednesdays of Lent.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES--The new heating cooling units have been installed at the school and are in full operation.

The new carpeting has been installed in three rooms at the school.

The parsonage master bathroom ceramic tile has been reglazed.

The Board of Trustees would like to thank all Church and School volunteers for cleaning among other tasks. We appreciate the countless hours everyone provides to take care of the facilities.

BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL



FROM MRS. LEITZ PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN:

Dear Memorial Members,

This month we have been learning about how God helped the Israelites take over the land of Canaan. We learn that we want to trust in God and strive to follow all of His commands at all times in our lives. We also want to give thanks to God for always helping us with all of our troubles in life, especially our biggest troubles of sin, death and the devil.

The three's have been learning how to write letters with our fun wet-dry-try method on our chalkboards. The four's have been working on the story "The City Mouse and The Country Mouse". We have been learning about how snow forms in the sky and all things that have to do with winter.

The Kindergarten have been working on addition and subtraction in math. They also have been started their second semester of Super Kids Units that focuses more on blending and reading whole words and sentences smoothly. In Science we have been learning about our senses.

May you all have a wonderful February!

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5:

This past month in our study of God's Word we have continued our travels with the children of Jacob (Israel) to the Promised Land. As of this week, we learned that the children of Israel had conquered the land and were ready to fully occupy it - they and their children and grandchildren. They were so blessed by God to have this land where the Savior would be born. Unfortunately, many of these people decided that it would be a good idea to turn away from God and toward the worship of idols.

We enjoyed going to the Williamston Senior Center in December to sing Christmas carols. It was a lovely time and well received by the ladies and gentlemen attending. We are planning on going again in May to sing our upcoming play songs. Our Spring play will be on Friday, May 17, so mark your calendars! The children in our school would be so pleased if many people would come to see them.

Grades 3-5 are getting ready for the Michigan Lutheran Seminary Fine Arts Fair in March. Students may participate in spelling, vocal and instrumental music, science, art and forensics. We always have a large percentage of our students participating. We also have a good time and do very well.

Grades 3-5 are studying Life Science this year. Right now we are learning about vertebrates. We have read very interesting books about reptiles and amphibians, raptors, and all the fish. More is coming and so much more to be learned. One of the very cool things about all these vertebrates is that they are so different from each other, and yet point so clearly to God's amazing creation.

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR FEBRUARY SERVICES:

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Playlist</u>	<u>Greeter(s)</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
2/04	S. Houser, Z. Pederson	R. Hoag	K. Remus	A & J Rusnak	Fisher (by 2/10)
2/11	A. Rusnak, P. Jantos	K. Ward	J. Leitz	V & J Domke	Fortin (by 2/17)
2/14	T. Loeffler, J. Zoran	K. Ward	R. Vedder*		
2/18	D. Rector, K. Remus	S. Arnston	N. Hart*	G. Withey	Hoag (by 2/25)
2/21	D. Fisher, P. Crandall, B. Janecke	S. Arnston	J. Janecke		
2/25	B. Briggs, D. Miller	M. Groop	Z. Pederson	J & S Janecke	Houser (by 3/2)
2/28	T. Marion, H. Clark, D. Fortin	M. Groop	J. Domke		

*guest organist