



Lois M. Sander

April 27, 1942 - April 7, 2026

Lois Marie Sander

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Lois Marie Sander, 83, of Hamel, Illinois, was called to heaven on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, trusting in the promise of the resurrection and the life everlasting through Jesus Christ.

Lois was born on April 27, 1942, in Litchfield, Illinois, to Erwin and Jesse (Schmidt) Mansholt. From an early age, she was blessed with a love of learning and a faithful spirit. Her education started at the Red School, a one-room schoolhouse with a single teacher—the same school her parents had attended. As the family prospered, they moved to nearby Gillespie, where she showed her ability to work hard and excel at her father's farm implement business, and as a carhop at the local drive-in. She knew all 1960s-era cars by make and model at a glance as a result. She was a gifted student, the school newspaper editor, and graduated as Valedictorian of Gillespie High School. She went on to Illinois State University, earning her bachelor's degree in education in 1964.

She loved teaching, and was a truly dedicated educational professional, always improving her craft. She continued her studies at the University of Illinois, receiving her Master of Education degree in 1966, and later earned a second Master of Science in Reading Education from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in 1982, where she researched the efficacy of varying reading pedagogies.

On June 11, 1966, Lois was united in holy marriage to Marvin H. Sander at Zion Lutheran Church in Gillespie, Illinois. The Lord blessed their marriage for many years. They made their home in Hamel and later nearby rural Edwardsville.

Lois lived out her vocation as a teacher with purpose and joy, first serving students in Edwardsville Public Schools and then for many years at Trinity St. Paul Lutheran School in Hamel, where she taught until her retirement in 2001. In her classroom she not only taught

academic subjects, but also modeled patience, discipline, and Christian love. Her students (and sons) thought it unfair that she usually knew what they were about to do before they did it.

She was an exceptional wife and mother—with many nights spent watching Marvin pitch and coach softball, tending large gardens and an orchard, and exceptional efforts developing their two sons' many academic interests and sports endeavors. Lois made daily life educational, and toured them through museums and performances, making sure they had exposure to ideas and technology, and even typed the odd term paper at midnight. She nurtured her sons in their Christian faith, providing private and religious education for them from kindergarten to college, and cementing the tradition of community service in them. She also created a very fun and social environment at home, hosting innumerable events such as extended family dinners, celebrations, card parties and even winter sledding events. She enjoyed wide friendships and the presence of an exceptionally large extended family.

Lois and family travelled extensively, giving their sons adventures in nearly all 50 states by the time they went to college. She and Marvin also traveled around Europe, and later she travelled to many other international destinations. Her favorites were Alaska, Hawaii, and Israel, and she cherished memories made in many trips to Germany.

Her faith in Christ was the center of her life. A longtime member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hamel, Lois exemplified the servant leader, working faithfully in many callings: as an officer in the LWML, a Sunday School teacher, Bible School director, and a servant on numerous committees including Altar, Banner, Stewardship, and the Board of Christian Life. She also extended that through more than a decade of service with Lutheran Child and Family Services.

Lois received God's gifts with thanksgiving and shared them generously. She found joy in traveling, reading, crocheting, knitting, quilting, and sewing. She delighted in gardening, genealogy, writing, photography, and time spent with family playing cards and dominoes. She compiled her father's notes into a book, and made individualized photo books that her family cherishes. In all things, she reflected a life shaped by her faith, her family, personal humility, and quiet service.

She is survived by her sons, Dr. David M. (Dr. Margaret) Sander of Sacramento, California, and Jonathan K. (Dr. Sanna) Sander of North Potomac, Maryland; her beloved grandchildren, Charles, Erik, and Anya Sander; and her sister, Mary (Curtis) Strode of Marietta, Illinois.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Marvin H. Sander; her parents, Erwin and Jesse Mansholt; her sisters-in-law, Norma Jean (Duane) Hartlieb and Marilyn (Gary) Mangum; and her parents-in-law, Herbert and Olinda (Meyer) Sander.

Visitation will be held on Friday, April 10, 2026, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM, and again on Saturday, April 11, 2026, from 10:00 to 11:00 AM at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hamel, Illinois. The funeral service will follow at 11:00 AM, with Rev. Benjamin Ball officiating. Interment will take place at St. Paul Lutheran Cemetery in Hamel.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Paul Lutheran School.

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live.’” (John 11:25)

Thanks be to God for the life of Lois, and for the sure and certain hope of the resurrection through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **10**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

St. Paul Lutheran Church
6969 W Frontage Rd
Worden, IL 62097-2431
(618) 633-2209

Visitation

APR **11**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul Lutheran Church
6969 W Frontage Rd
Worden, IL 62097-2431
(618) 633-2209

Funeral Service

APR **11**. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul Lutheran Church
6969 W Frontage Rd
Worden, IL 62097-2431
(618) 633-2209

Tribute Wall

DH

“ Daniel H. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Lois M. Sander.

Daniel H. - April 10 at 01:27 PM

BN

“ Ben and Brenda Newman purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Lois M. Sander.



Ben and Brenda Newman - April 09 at 08:37 PM

BN

“ Ben and Brenda Newman planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Lois M. Sander.

Ben and Brenda Newman - April 09 at 08:37 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Lois M. Sander.



April 09 at 01:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Lois M. Sander.

April 09 at 01:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Lois M. Sander.

April 08 at 08:11 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Lois M. Sander.*



April 08 at 08:11 PM