

OCTOBER 2018

# SCHOOL MINISTRY

# Mailing





# Alight

FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS



## Walking Together



**M**ission outreach is essential to Lutheran schools. Every day tens of thousands of children enter the doors of Lutheran schools across the country and around the world, many without a church home. The Great Commission compels us to seek and save the lost. Ministries are strengthened when the leaders walk together.

The Lutheran school is an integral part of a congregation's ministry to children and families. The relationship between the church and school is explored and validated in the National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) process because it is so important. I still remember the intensive process of working with faculty, staff, students and congregation members in preparation of the NLSA Self-Study Report. The process involved surveys, focus groups and interviews to determine the actual practices of the school. We asked our students, "How do you know that this is a Christian school?" A second grader responded, "Well, the big church helps." What does this look like?

Meet Pastor Phillip Baerwolf, associate pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church and School in East Dundee, Ill., who is the NLSA 2018 School Shepherd. When asked the question "Why do you love your school?" Pastor Baerwolf replied, "Jesus has rescued me from sin, death and the devil, and I get the awesome privilege of sharing Jesus with the children. From leading preschool chapel times to walking through the six chief parts of the Catechism with our seventh graders, every day is an opportunity to remind them of Jesus and His love. I get to pray with volleyball teams and basketball teams before they compete in state and national tournaments, and I get to let them know that win or lose, Jesus is holding them in His precious arms of care. I get to listen to and marvel at children just beginning to play a clarinet and making beautiful music. I get to pray with a girl whose grandpa just died and assure her that Easter is real — that Jesus lives! How could you not love a place where you get to do that every day?"

The "big church" helps, but it is His people, walking together with a shared vision for spreading the Gospel message of salvation through faith in Christ with the hope and promise of eternal life for everyone, who mark a Christian school. Pastor Baerwolf adds, "As I told our faculty before the beginning of this school year, Lutheran school teachers are my heroes every day for being on the frontlines of sharing and showing the love of Christ with the Lord's precious lambs." And, Pastor Baerwolf, you are our hero too!

# October 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Positive Attitude Month <b>1</b>	Redwood National Park Established, 1968 <b>2</b>	First Woman US Senator, 1922 <b>3</b>	National Ships-in-Bottle Day <b>4</b>	Kids Music Day <b>5</b>	American Library Association Anniversary, 1876 <b>6</b>
Fire Prevention Week <b>7</b>	Columbus Day <b>8</b>	International Face Your Fears Day <b>9</b>	National Bullying Prevention Day <b>10</b>	National Depression Screening Day <b>11</b>	Luciano Pavarotti born, 1935 <b>12</b>	Fall Astronomy Day <b>13</b>
Dwight D. Eisenhower born, 1890 <b>14</b>	National Cake Decorating Day <b>15</b>	Dictionary Day <b>16</b>	Mulligan Day <b>17</b>	St. Luke, Evangelist <b>18</b>	Evaluate Your Life Day <b>19</b>	Sweetest Day <b>20</b>
Pastoral Care Week <b>21</b>	International Stuttering Awareness Day <b>22</b>	St. James of Jerusalem, Brother of Jesus and Martyr <b>23</b>	World Origami Days <b>24</b>	International Magic Week <b>25</b>	Erie Canal Anniversary, 1825 <b>26</b>	Federalist Papers Anniversary, 1787 <b>27</b>
St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles <b>28</b>	Internet Created Anniversary, 1969 <b>29</b>	National Candy Corn Day <b>30</b>	Reformation Day <b>31</b>			

Visit [lcms.org/worship](http://lcms.org/worship) to find resources and information connected to the church year.



# Computer File



## Quick Tools to Help Measure STUDENT PROGRESS AND DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION



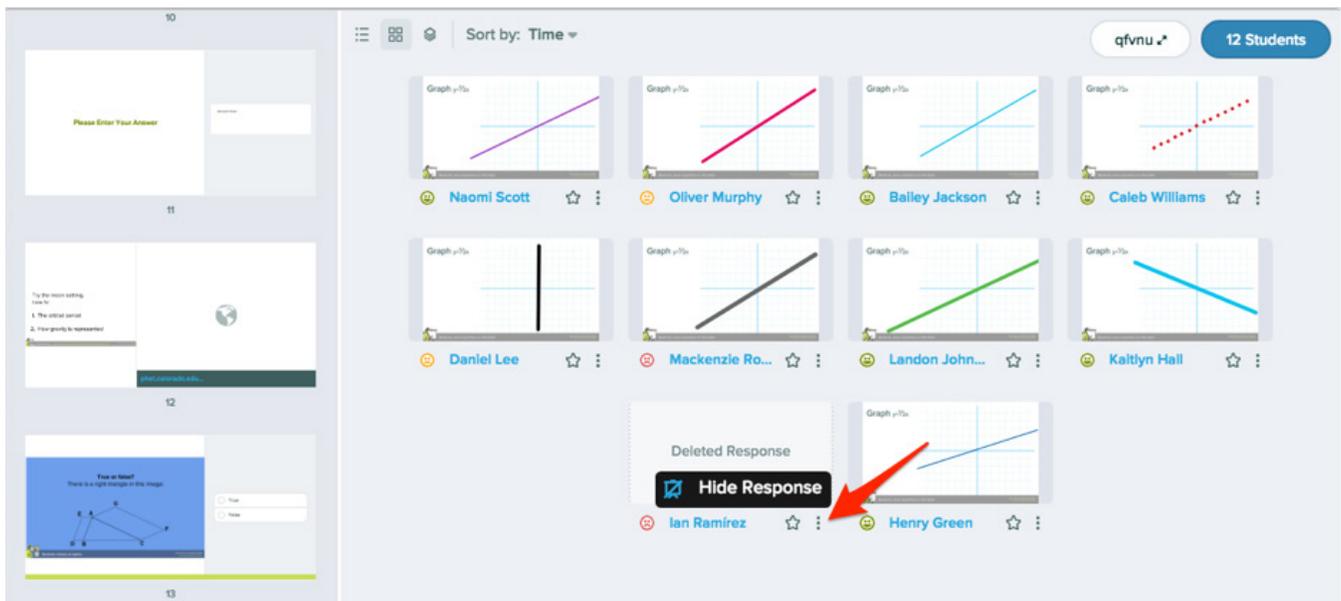
**O**ver the past decade, we as instructors have been called to be better practitioners of data-driven instruction. There are three levels of data that impact our instruction. At the top are the large standardized tests that we might give once or twice a year. We also have our common assessments that we build ourselves to assess student knowledge at the semester or unit level. The third level is the formative assessments that allow us to keep a pulse on where our students are in real time. While all three levels of assessment are important and have their places in curriculum and instructional planning, I would argue that, with advances in technology, the third level of using formative assessments gives the teacher the most powerful tools to inform instruction.

Formative assessment is the teacher's eyes in the classroom. These assessments are what we use to gauge where a student is in the learning process. They should be quick and provide the student with immediate feedback. They will inform teachers on how to proceed

with instruction. Imagine driving a car while wearing a blindfold. How do we know where we are going, when to speed up or when to slow down? As teachers we often get in the habit of navigating our classroom with blindfolds on. We look at our curriculum and lesson plans, see that we need to cover points A, B and C and blaze forward, seldom checking to see if our students actually understood points A, B and C. Master teachers have always been masters of formative assessment. They use all available tools to gauge where their students are and apply the gas and brake pedals appropriately.

Technology has allowed us as teachers to take formative assessment to a whole new level. It allows us to individualize instruction and meet the needs of not only each class we teach, but also each individual learner. There are many different tools that will help teachers accomplish this task. One extremely popular tool is Edpuzzle ([edpuzzle.com](http://edpuzzle.com)). Edpuzzle allows you to take an existing video from YouTube, TedEd or other popular video sites and overlay your own formative assessment. When students reach a certain point in the video, they must answer your question correctly before they are allowed to proceed with the video. This simple check for understanding allows you as the teacher to see how the students are understanding the content that you want them to consume.

A second popular option that provides a suite of formative assessment tools is Pear Deck ([peardeck.com](http://peardeck.com)). Pear Deck allows the teacher to build interactive slides that can be used with the whole class on the screen or that students can browse at their own pace. What makes Pear Deck powerful for the teachers is the real-time dashboard (premium feature) that allows them to quickly see how an entire class is doing and at the same time check on each individual student.



Example of teacher dashboard (Image: PearDeck.com)

What is even more powerful if you have Google Apps is that each student will receive an individualized copy of their responses throughout the lesson that they can then annotate and use as a study tool. Editorial Note: Nearpod ([nearpod.com](http://nearpod.com)) is a similar product, and it offers many of the same features; however, I personally find the teacher dashboard in Pear Deck easier to use.

While formative assessment is important in every topic, math teachers often find themselves struggling to keep up with providing each individual student with the help that he needs at the time that he needs it. This is where programs like ALEKS ([aleks.com](http://aleks.com)), Imagine Math ([imaginelearning.com/programs/math](http://imaginelearning.com/programs/math)), IXL ([ixl.com](http://ixl.com)) and Khan Academy ([khanacademy.org](http://khanacademy.org)) come into play. These tools allow teachers to monitor their students' individual progress and then apply timely feedback and support when necessary. This might be one of the most powerful tools that allow differentiated instruction for the computational skills, and then the teacher can provide structure and support for projects and applications "just in time" to support the students' learning.

The bottom line is that students learn when we provide real-time feedback on their learning. Formative assessment prior to easy-to-use technological tools at the individual level has been difficult and time consuming.

This is one area of teaching and learning that technology has been able to greatly enhance. Not only do these tools provide teachers the necessary information to adjust their instruction at the individual student level, but teachers also save time doing it. It is a Win! Win!



## USEFUL TOOLS

EdPuzzle – [edpuzzle.com](http://edpuzzle.com)  
 Pear Deck – [peardeck.com](http://peardeck.com)  
 Nearpod – [nearpod.com](http://nearpod.com)  
 ALEKS – [aleks.com](http://aleks.com)

Imagine Math – [imaginelearning.com/programs/math](http://imaginelearning.com/programs/math)  
 IXL – [ixl.com](http://ixl.com)  
 Khan Academy – [khanacademy.com](http://khanacademy.com)



# Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7

REAL. PRESENT. GOD.

FOCUS: Jesus Is Real. Jesus Is Present. Jesus is God.

## Jesus Walks on Water

(Matt. 14:22–32; Mark 6:45–51; John 6:16–21)

### Before You Teach

This month's narrative focuses on the peace that Jesus brings in times of fear. Children need to be taught and reminded that they can lean on Jesus. They need to see Him at work in the lives of adults and be encouraged to pray to Him anytime they are afraid. Let us teach and pray that the Holy Spirit will comfort us when we are afraid and remind us that we can lean on Jesus for help and comfort in times of need.

### Greeting

Welcome each child upon entry. **“Good morning (afternoon), child of God. I am so very happy you are here today!** These first few seconds establish a positive outlook for the day.

### Gathering

**YOU WILL NEED:** A designated worship area (a table or small altar, an altar cloth, a cross or picture of Jesus, a Bible and a battery-operated candle).

Signal children to gather together. Teach and sing or pray: **Let our prayers and praises ring, and to Jesus let us bring open ears and hearts now stirred to receive God's holy Word.**

[Tune: “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” (LOSP, P. 96)]



### Tell the Story

**PREPARATION:** Draw a blue “water” line and adhere a precut boat shape to chart paper or poster board; precut simple Jesus and Peter figures. .

**SHOW AND OPEN THE BIBLE.** One day Jesus told His disciples to get into a boat (**add sticker dots to boat**) and row to the other side of a lake while He said goodbye to a crowd of people. When evening came, the disciples were far from land. The wind was blowing and waves (**draw waves**) of water were growing higher, splashing more and more water into the small boat. Darkness had come (**scribble to blacken sky**) by the time Jesus (**add Jesus figure**) went out to the disciples, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw Jesus they were very afraid, shouting, “It’s a ghost!” Jesus said to them, “Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid!” Then the disciple Peter said, “Lord, if it’s You, tell me to come to You on the water.” “Come!” Jesus said. (**Add Peter figure on water.**)

Peter got out of the boat and, walking on the water, went toward Jesus. But when the wind began to blow, Peter became afraid and began to sink (lower figure). He shouted, “Lord, save me!” **(Repeat with children.)** Immediately, Jesus reached out and caught Peter saying, “You have so little faith. Why do you not trust Me?” When Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat, the wind stopped blowing. Amazed, the disciples worshiped Jesus, saying, “Truly, Jesus, You are the Son of God.” **(Repeat with children.)** Jesus was with Peter and the other disciples! Jesus is real! We trust Jesus to always be with us! **(Repeat.)** Jesus is God! **(Repeat.)**



### PRAY TOGETHER

Children repeat each phrase first spoken by the leader.

Dear Jesus / You are with me everywhere / Thank You for Your loving care / Amen.

### Remember the Story

#### BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

**Pre-K & K:** “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear” (HEB. 13:6A).

**Gr. 1 & 2:** “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go” (GEN. 28: 15).



#### ACTIVITIES

**Create:** You will need: White paper, brown construction paper, sticker dots and blue and/or gray tempera paint, markers or water colors. Guide children to paint a storm scene. Precut, or have children cut, boat shapes from construction paper. Guide them to place sticker dot “disciples” in their “boats.” Glue boats to dried “storm” paintings. Display with the Bible words.

**Do:** “Feelings” Game. Jesus’ disciples were afraid. Feelings are not good or bad; they simply are. Preparation: On each side of a small square box, draw a facial expression portraying an emotion, e.g., happy,



sad, angry, afraid, confused or frustrated. Children take turns rolling the die, naming the expression shown and telling something that might cause them to feel that way. Jesus always loves however we may feel!

**Sing:** “God Is Near Me” {LOSP, P. 107} (Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”). Invite children to add verses, e.g., “When I’m glad and happy,” “When I’m very angry,” “When I’m tired and grumpy

### Live the Story

We teach trust by being trustworthy. Predictability and consistency are important components of establishing and maintaining trust relationships, especially with young children. It is critical to be who we say we are and to do what we say we do. Speak the truth in love. Promise only that which can be achieved.

### Sending

Gather children in a “Sending Circle.” Pass a beanbag or small cross, guiding each child to take a turn to offer a brief prayer or to silently pass the beanbag/cross along. As children depart, say to each, **Jesus is with you wherever you go!**



# Family Matters

A CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS



REAL. PRESENT. GOD.

## It's Starting to Get Real



**As a parent,** perhaps you've experienced the following comments from your children already this school year:

- › First homework assignment: “No problem.”
- › First test: “Aced it.”
- › First project: “Ready to go.”

By this time in the school year, the newness has worn off; the luster of new beginnings is turning into the reality of the long haul. Maybe it is going well — your child is making adjustments as needed, keeping up with expectations and making good grades! You may, perhaps, be experiencing a different reality — your child is struggling with the workload, feeling social uncertainty and encountering a subject area that is very challenging. Reality has set in.

How do you respond to a new and challenging reality? Can you see the future ahead of you as well as your child? Are you one who tackles concerns head on? Are you one who addresses issues in small, manageable ways? Do you prefer to focus on areas in which you find success rather than areas in which you struggle?

We all have our preferred go-to behaviors when it comes to challenges. Some of these are very positive and help us address concerns and create viable solutions; other behaviors can be less helpful and can bring negative results. The world in which we live would encourage us to “go it on our own, hunker down, pull ourselves up by the bootstraps, so that we can put our best foot forward.” These pithy sayings can soothe us for a moment or two, but in the long run, our cries for support and assistance can go unnoticed and leave us feeling empty and alone.

Where do we go when things get real? To whom do we turn? How do we find hope and healing?

In Matthew Chapter 9, we read about two blind men who are following Jesus when they call out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David” (v. 27). In the follow-up conversation, Jesus asks them if they believe that He can heal them. “Yes, Lord” (v. 28) is their reply. Jesus restores the sight of these two men.

Jesus knew their condition, and He knows our condition. He has compassion. He is interested in helping us just as He was interested in healing these blind men. He knows that we are blind in this life — we don't always see the clear path ahead that He would have us walk. We don't always see the blessings of the Father in the reality of our daily lives. And on that day — our last day, when it will be very real that the end is near — Jesus comes to our side, He sees our reality, our sin, and He announces that His death and resurrection has covered it — we are forgiven and He will welcome us to our eternal home.

Jesus is real. He is present. Jesus is God. He is loving. He walks with us in the realities of life every day. He hears our cry for mercy and responds.

Gather the family together in a comfortable place for study and discussion using the outline below.

## OPENING PRAYER

Given by the person who was last to sit down for dinner tonight.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION TIME

Ask family members to give a “thumbs up,” “thumbs down” or “so-so” (balancing thumb and pinkie) response to each item below and share why.

I am afraid of...

- > snails
- > spiders
- > snakes
- > kitty-cats
- > lions
- > tigers
- > bears
- > scary movies
- > roller-coasters
- > the dark
- > going someplace new
- > flying in an airplane
- > elevators



## FAMILY STUDY TIME

Have someone in the family read Matt. 9:27–31, and discuss the following questions:

- 1 Why did these men follow Jesus?  
(They were blind and wanted healing)
- 2 How did they get the attention of Jesus?  
(Called out, “Lord, have mercy on us”)
- 3 What did Jesus do?  
(He first asked them a question to show they believed)

Then Jesus, upon hearing their confession of faith, restored their sight.

- 4 What did these men do?  
(They told people anyway!)
- 5 Why do you think they told others when Jesus asked them not to do this?  
(Answers will vary)
- 6 What did Jesus ask them to do?  
(Not to tell anyone about their healing)

## FAMILY ACTIVITY

### Blind Guessing Game

- 1 Obtain a blindfold that will fit everyone in the family.
- 2 Locate any number of simple household items.
- 3 Blindfold members of the family one by one and have them try to guess the item placed in their hands.

### Follow-up Questions for Discussion:

- What was hard about this activity?
- What was easy about this activity?
- Was it frightening in any way?
- What would it be like if you couldn’t see?
- How do you think the blind men felt when Jesus healed them?



## CLOSING FAMILY LITANY

On a piece of paper, create a list of tough things, challenges, health concerns and struggles that your friends and family are experiencing. Once the list is complete, have a family member read each item out loud one by one, with the rest of the family responding each time with the words, “Lord, have mercy.” Hold hands as a family as you do this.



A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY



# Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



## Students on the Autism Spectrum, Part 1



**T**here's a common expression said when talking about individuals with autism: "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism." While it could be argued that this applies to any type of learning difference, this statement definitely rings true for autism spectrum disorders. After you've had a student with autism in your classroom and you've figured out what strategies work for him or her, you may quickly realize that none of the same strategies work for another student with a similar diagnosis who is in your class the next year. You scratch your head trying to figure out new strategies and ways

for that student to be successful. This and next month's articles in *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made* will describe the signs, strengths, struggles and strategies for students on the autism spectrum.

While there are a number of signs that may indicate an individual is on the autism spectrum, please refrain from making or verbalizing this diagnosis yourself. Leave that to the appropriate qualified professionals, and voice concerns in terms of signs you notice in the classroom rather than assigning a label to them. According to Autism Speaks ([autismspeaks.org](http://autismspeaks.org)), only about 40 percent of individuals on the autism spectrum have average to above-average intellectual abilities and about 25 percent are non-verbal. There will be very specific and unique gifts a student has, such as a strong rote memory or knowledge of a specific topic, but these may not always indicate above-average IQ. Other common signs may be difficulty with social skills and relating to peers, having an intense and almost obsessive area of interest and unusual play with toys and other objects. Many students also have great difficulty with transitions and changes in routine. Repetitive movements, behaviors and language also may be present, as well as difficulty using and understanding language.

Although Asperger syndrome is largely not diagnosed separately from autism spectrum disorders anymore, the main difference in these diagnoses was the potential delay in speech and language. Individuals diagnosed with Asperger syndrome do not have a speech delay that other students on the spectrum may have. Students with Asperger syndrome may have good language skills

but typically use language in a different way than their peers. Speech patterns may be unusual and lack inflection and intonation or may have a rhythmic and formal quality. Subtleties of language, such as irony and sarcasm, may also be difficult for these students to understand.

Many signs of autism are apparent in early childhood, with the most obvious signs emerging between the ages of 2 and 3. Some of these early signs include a lack of babbling and gesturing (pointing, waving) by 12 months old, no spoken words by 16 months, and a lack of two-word meaningful phrases, without imitating or repeating, by 24 months. Lack of eye contact, reciprocating smiles, and responses to his or her name or the sound of a familiar voice are also signs of autism in young children. These young children also may not initiate or respond to cuddling, reach out to be picked up, imitate movements or facial expressions and play with other children. Keep in mind that seeing some of these signs does not mean a child has autism, but help families find an appropriate diagnostician if many signs are being noticed.

There are definite strengths that individuals on the autism spectrum possess as well. As previously mentioned, the student may have a strong interest in a specific topic that often results in being highly skilled and knowledgeable about that topic to a degree that other students do not have. These students may have very strong rote memories, particularly in these areas of interest. There also may be a great attention to detail and the ability to be logical without emotions interfering as may be the case for others. These students are often independent thinkers and may have different ideas and insights than the majority of their classmates. They typically do better with visual and hands-on learning experiences, so incorporating these types of activities in the classroom will be helpful.

Students on the autism spectrum often think



in pictures or video and have strength in visual processing. They may see a situation in their minds as it occurred previously, remembering how it occurred then and expecting the same pattern or response whenever that situation arises again. This can be a strength, but also a struggle in certain situations! These students are often direct and honest while communicating, describing a

situation as they see it without emotional interference. Some students will have above average intelligence, but, as discussed previously, this is not a requirement for a student to be considered on the autism spectrum. Since each student is unique and fearfully and wonderfully made, different strengths will be seen in each student, and it is important to notice these and use the student's strengths to overcome challenges.

Check back next month for more discussion on the struggles and strategies surrounding students on the autism spectrum. In the meantime, please reach out to Lutheran Special Education Ministries to help with any questions in general or about specific students you have in your classroom! Visit [luthsped.org](http://luthsped.org) or contact us at [lsem@luthsped.org](mailto:lsem@luthsped.org).



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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

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# Growing in Governing

GROWTH TOPICS AND DISCUSSIONS FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARDS



## Successfully Funded Schools



School has begun and is in full swing. How exciting! As children walk through the doors, there is a realization that they have physically grown and will continue to mature. The opportunities we have in our Lutheran schools are indeed incredible. Daily teaching includes service to others, in the name of the Lord. We build relationships together — and especially the ones between student and teacher. As God’s Word is clearly shared in these relationships, it never falls upon deaf ears. Is. 55:11 says, “so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

“Real. Present. God.” is the theme of the 2019 National Youth Gathering. The subtheme is “A Very Present Help.” It is based upon Luther’s favorite psalm: Psalm 46. There are parallels to this psalm as it relates to the topic of thriving Lutheran schools. A large number of

schools have closed in the past ten years. Many more are struggling to remain the vital outposts of mission that they are intended to be. We receive strength and God’s promises from Ps. 46:1–5:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the

midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.”

Some characteristics of successfully funded Lutheran schools, as stated in the Governing Board Resource for Lutheran Schools, are listed below. When the funding is present, chances are that there is more of an opportunity to move forward in confidence.

### **A Shared Ministry**

The congregation and school jointly promote and support their ministries; the administrator and school staff are available and visible in the church program; the pastors are available and visible in the school program.

### **A United Congregational Leadership**

The congregation understands and accepts the school and its mission; consistently strong role models support church and school.

## The Mission Statement

The mission statement clearly explains why the school needs financial support; it gives direction; stakeholders know the mission; it describes the ministry.

## A Distinctive Education Program

The education program fulfills the goals of the congregation and community; it offers the community the program it needs; it provides quality Christian education.

## A Trained School Board

The board understands school funding is a primary responsibility; it seeks ways to strengthen the funding base; it communicates the financial situation with the congregation and community.

## A Driven Development Team

The development team shows leadership in school funding; it takes action; it takes reasonable risks in providing school funding; it removes burdens from the administrator.

## An Aggressive Marketing Plan

The marketing plan seeks ways to retain current students; it provides for student recruitment.

## A Strategic Financial Plan

The financial plan has a strategy to secure annual cash flow; it is designed for future financial security.

## An Enlightened Administrator

The administrator realizes financial challenges are happening and will continue to happen; she prepares personally for change; he gathers a funding team to direct the school's financial plan; she leads the staff and board through change.

## An Up-Front Pastor

The pastor accepts the school as a ministry; he shows a partnership in implementing the mission of the school; he promotes and supports innovative ideas in the changing financial times.

There are many more components that could be discussed, but these have a history of providing a planned process to encourage successful funding. Administrators should take a close look at the tuition

and fees model, ask good questions and do the needed homework. At what level can the congregation support the school?

The diamonds that we have in our Lutheran school system must be cleaned and polished so that they reflect the light that is shining brightly in each of them. We cannot just hope they will survive financially. It all must be researched and planned out with great wisdom. At times it can even take such drastic measures as moving an entire campus to a demographic where new opportunities for evangelism arise. Meaningful conversations need to occur. The quality of the school must be second to none. The staff must truly understand what it means to be distinctively Lutheran. They must have that same knowledge and engagement to be the very best educators who teach and inspire. God can and does work through all these details. Allow your board to take the lead in having a strong vision and plan. Support and fulfill your mission, according to His will.

## Resources

- ▶ Organizations able to assist with creating an endowment and an annual fund
- ▶ “How to Write a Mission Statement”
- ▶ School Board training documents
- ▶ PowerPoint: The Pastor-Principal Relationship

Resources or continued conversations are available by contacting the author at [thomas.wrege@zionwalburg.org](mailto:thomas.wrege@zionwalburg.org).





# Insights & Ideas

FOR TEACHERS OF CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7



## Happy Anniversary *Insights & Ideas!*

Here's a little bit of history! In 1945, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) recorded 127 kindergartens and one nursery school in operation. Twenty-six years later, 52 nursery school programs were listed in the *Lutheran Annual*. In 1973 at the LCMS Synod Convention, the Board for Parish Services presented Resolution 7-03 titled “To Encourage Development of Early Childhood Education Programs.” The result was the vision of Melvin Kieschnick (LCMS Board of Parish Education) with *Project Young Child*. Joanne Eisenberg was its first director. One of her initiatives for equipping teachers was the creation of the *Insights & Ideas* newsletter, designed for educators working in the field of early childhood education in Lutheran schools.<sup>1</sup>

This school year we are sharing nine issues of *Insights & Ideas* from the 1978–79 school year to celebrate Joanne Eisenberg's inspiration and 40 years of talented writers and their remarkable resources for the Lutheran early childhood classroom.

<sup>1</sup> Judith Christian, “Early Childhood Education in the LCMS,” *Issues in Christian Education – A Publication of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska*, Vol. 47, no. 2 (2014): 7–9.

# 1979 October

**T**his month, Joanne Eisenberg explores the topic of a “Curriculum for Caring.” She proposes an intergenerational approach to working with children to establish a connection to the outside world by opening the preschool classroom for interactions with visitors of all ages. Joanne embraces a relaxed, flexible schedule with caring teachers to take children “beyond the basics.”

With the October newsletter come the history of the Great Pumpkin, All Saints' Day, pinecone owls, floating jack-o-lanterns and a highlight of author Ed Emberley's literature for children. Joanne shares a pumpkin cookie recipe to help children make the connection between a pumpkin growing in a garden and us enjoying it in something tasty. Have you heard of Indian Shuck Bread? I confess, I had not, but what an interesting idea! I learn something new every day!

Please note, we decided to use the October 1979 *Insights & Ideas* article as we were unable to locate the October 1978 article in our records. We apologize for any confusion this may cause.

## CURRICULUM, CURRICULUM, CURRICULUM

I was reading an article the other day by Urie Bronfenbrenner, about a fantastic curriculum. Unlike most curricula today, it wasn't concerned with "back to basics." Nor did it emphasize Montessori's materials, Piaget's play theory, or the British integrated curriculum. This was a CURRICULUM FOR CARING.

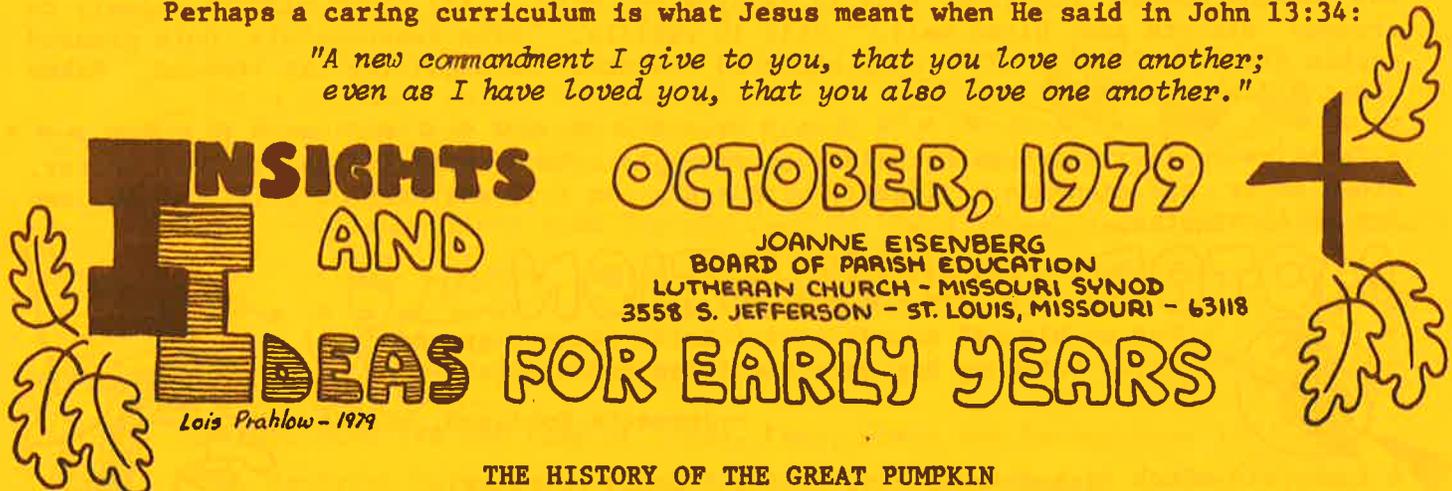
In summary, the article discussed the idea of "breaking down the walls around the school, community, and parents, to establish a bridge for children to the outside world." Studies show that it is possible for a young person today to graduate from high school, never having known well any other adults except his or her parents and maybe a handful of teachers; never having held a baby for more than a minute; never having cared for one who is old or ill; or never having comforted the lonely.

Years ago, kids learned to care merely by being part of a family--aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents. The change in the American family and society today, and in relationships and interaction among people, leaves a void when it comes to teaching kids to REALLY care for others.

What better place to initiate a CURRICULUM FOR CARING than in the early childhood programs of our Lutheran schools. The relaxed, flexible schedule, caring teachers, and friendly, curious pupil populace are just the right setting to introduce children to all kinds and ages of people--to help them understand that old people may have wrinkles but can still sing songs, or play musical instruments, or help with art projects; and that babies may not be good playmates for preschoolers, but preschoolers may be good teachers for babies.

Perhaps a caring curriculum is what Jesus meant when He said in John 13:34:

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another;  
even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."*



# INSIGHTS AND IDEAS FOR EARLY YEARS

OCTOBER, 1979

JOANNE EISENBERG  
BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION  
LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD  
3558 S. JEFFERSON - ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - 63118

Lois Prahlow - 1979

## THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT PUMPKIN

To most Americans, Halloween would not be the same without pumpkins and Jack-o'-lanterns. However, the custom of making Jack-o'-lanterns originated in Scotland long before pumpkins had been introduced into that area from Central and South America.

Halloween dates back to the Celts of Britain and Northern France. It was believed that on October 31 the spirits of all ancestors arose and congregated for assignments during the coming year. Anyone who went out on that night carried a lantern for protection.

The church also chose this time, associated with spirits of the dead, for a holiday. All Saints' Day was organized into the church year to celebrate and recognize the saints, martyrs and the faithful.

In Scotland it became custom to hollow out large turnips or rutabagas and place candles inside them. Originally holes were put only in the sides to emit light, but these later became faces, possibly to scare off evil spirits.

When the early settlers came to America, turnips did not normally grow as large and pumpkins were very common in fall. These pumpkins didn't have to be hollowed out, and were much more showy. Thus, the tradition gradually changed to the form we know today.

--By Ray Rothenberger (PRESCHOOL QUARTERLY)

# FOODS

--Indian Shuck Bread: Wash and soak complete corn husks in cold water. Have each child prepare the following:

- 3 T cornmeal
- 1/8 t. salt
- 1/8 t. baking powder
- 1 T hot water



Spoon the stiff batter onto the drained, dried corn husk. The husk is then folded over to form a sealed package and tied with a string. Boil in a pot of water for 10 minutes. Remove from husk. Eat plain or with honey or jam.

--Pumpkin Cookies: Steam or bake pieces of the pumpkin until tender. Mash the cooked pumpkin.

- |                                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1/2 C. butter or margarine (1 stick) | 1/2 t. nutmeg           |
| 1 1/4 C. brown sugar                 | 2 1/4 C. sifted flour   |
| 2 eggs                               | 4 t. baking powder      |
| 1 1/2 C. cooked, mashed pumpkin      | 1 t. vanilla            |
| 1/2 t. salt                          | 1 C. raisins            |
| 1/2 t. ginger                        | 1 C. walnuts (optional) |
| 1/2 t. cinnamon                      |                         |



Cream butter and sugar well. Add eggs, pumpkin and seasonings. Mix well. Sift flour and baking powder together; stir in raisins and nuts. Add flour mixture slowly to creamed mixture and blend well. Stir in vanilla. Drop teaspoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet. Bake in 375° oven about 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes about 3 dozen cookies.

--Campfire Apples: Give each child a cored apple. Have child fill apple with butter, brown sugar and cinnamon. Tightly wrap apple in foil and bake on grill or in oven for 30-45 minutes.

# MOTOR PERCEPTION



See my big and scary eyes (Circle fingers around eyes)  
Watch out now, big surprize (Clap hands once)

--Jeanette Robinson, Toledo, OH



A funny old witch in a pointed cap, (Point fingers together)  
Came to my door with a rap, rap, rap! (Rap on floor or table)  
I went out to see, and a witch was there.  
She jumped on her broomstick and flew through the air. (Pretend to ride broomstick)

--Floating Jack-O-Lantern: Give each child an inflated orange balloon. Allow time to draw a face on the balloon with felt tip pens. Let children bat, kick, chase and throw balloons around the room. At a given signal, children sit on their "jack-o-lanterns" and break them.

--Ghost Toss: Drape a white Kleenex over a lollipop. Tie around the "neck." Add facial features. Play a game by having children toss lollipop ghosts into trick or treat bag or plastic jack-o-lantern.

# ART



--Skeleton Puppet: Cut out skeleton head and glue to sandwich bag to make a ghost puppet. Hand in transparent bag gives illusion of skeleton's body. Good for telling Halloween stories.

--Pine Cone Owl: Use a small or medium sized pine cone. Add beak and eyes. Attach to a small twig or branch with glue or clay.



--Ghost Nut Cup: Paint "push clothespin" white and add eyes. Cut a 6" x 3" piece of white tissue paper for the arms. Put between prongs on clothespins. Attach to 3½ oz. plastic solo drinking cup (front prong inside cup, back prong and tissue paper arms on back of cup). Fill with goodies!



--Lay a leaf, vein side up, on a sheet of newspaper. Heavily color the entire leaf with a crayon. (Use all one color or color different sections of the leaf various colors.) Put leaf, (colored side down), on a sheet of white drawing paper. Use a protective layer of newspaper under and over the work. Iron at medium heat. The delicate leaf pattern will be transferred to the white paper.



# MUSIC



--To the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"

God made  , God made  (PUMPKINS; GRAPES)

God made  , and  (MICE; HAIRY APES)

God made  , God made  (CARROTS; BEETS)

God made  , and  (DOVES; PARAKEETS)

Thank you, God! (Chorus)

--From: GOD'S MY FRIEND (by Carol Greene Concordia Publishing House)

--CHRIS COLUMBUS (To the tune of "Sailing, Sailing")

Sailing, sailing over the ocean blue,  
 Chris Columbus sailed the sea in 1492.  
 He found America, big and wild and free,  
 The land that now belongs to you and you and you and me!



--FALLING LEAVES SONG (To the tune of "Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow")



We're little autumn leaves, you see,  
 Falling from a tall, tall tree;  
 We whirl and twirl and float around,  
 Settling down upon the ground.



--MR. SQUIRREL SONG (To the tune of "Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow")

Mr. Squirrel is running 'round, (Run on tiptoe in place)  
 Gathering nuts from off the ground, (Stoop to gather nuts)  
 He safely hides them ev'ry one, (Hands behind back)  
 Mr. Squirrel is having fun. (Clap hands)



# SCHOOL KEEPING HINTS

--Have children make placemats for snack time. Collect and press leaves of various kinds and sizes. Use crayons to stencil around leaves on a piece of construction paper. Laminate or cover with clear contact paper. Finished mat can be cut in oval or other shape if desired.

--Cut holes in the lid of a candy or cheese box to hold small cans or jars. Makes an excellent paint holder rack that resists tipping.

--Place a piece of wet sponge inside the lid of a jar of paste to keep the paste moist between uses.

--Mini First Aid Kit: Use a Sucrets or Band-aid box for a mini first aid kit on short walks or jaunts. Fill with bandaids, a 2" x 2" gauze pad, 10" of adhesive tape wrapped on a little stick and a small tube of burn ointment. Kit fits easily into pocket or purse.



# BULLETIN BOARDS



SELFISH

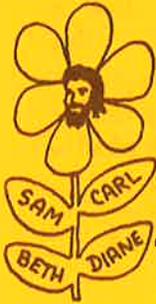


GRUMPY



NOISEY

--Cover the board with black paper. Caption it: "Keep These Spooks Away This Halloween." Make ghosts out of a full sheet of tissue paper. Stuff the heads with tissue paper for a 3-D affect. Add scary facial features. Label ghosts with nametags; "Noisy, Grumpy, Selfish, etc." (Nametags can be changed from day to day to depict classroom concerns.)



--"Let's Grow Together" is an appropriate classroom topic for the beginning of the school year. Using this as a caption, make a huge flower with 5-7 petals. Put a picture of Jesus in the center of the flower. Add a tall stem and leaves. Print a child's name on each leaf. Be sure the leaves are at the children's eye level so they can read their names. Move the leaves up higher as the children grow during the year. (This idea can also be put on a door instead of a bulletin board and left for the entire school year.)

## HOME AND SCHOOL

--Tell your parents about the newsletter, DADS ONLY. Order from P. O. Box 20594, San Diego, CA 92120. (12 months, \$11.50)

--Three booklets of the new CHRISTIAN PARENT SERIES pertaining to early childhood are now available from Concordia Publishing House at \$2.50 each:

"Your New Baby" #141201; "Child Development" #141202; "Home Enrichment" #141204

--A home viewers guide for FOOTSTEPS (a television series on parenting) is available from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare/Office of Education, Washington DC 20201. The program and guide are excellent.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

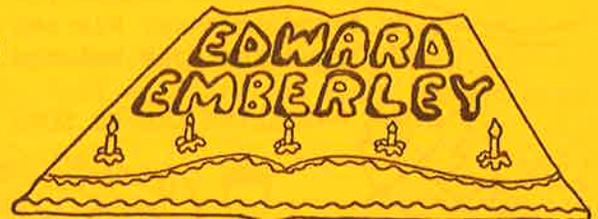
Born: October 19, 1931 in Massachusetts

Present Home: Ipswich, Massachusetts

Family: Wife - Barbara (Author of children's books) 2 children

Favorite Media: Woodcuts

1968 Caldecott Winner for Drummer Hoff written by wife, Barbara, illustrated by Mr. Emberley.



For Young Children: Another book by the Emberleys

ONE WIDE RIVER TO CROSS (1966) An old folk song based on Noah's Ark. The woodcuts were printed by Ed on his own press. Each figure is cut on a separate block of wood. A good counting book.

Illustrated by Mr. Emberley:

Shackburg, R. YANKEE DOODLE (1965) Illustrated version of the famous song done in red, white and blue woodcuts.

Written and illustrated by Mr. Emberley: (All published by Little Brown)

A BIRTHDAY WISH (1977)

ED EMBERLEY'S A. B. C. (1978)

LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN (1967)

GREEN SAYS GO (1968)

THE WING ON A FLEA: A BOOK ABOUT SHAPES (1961) Mr. Emberley's very first book for children.

Over the past 10 years, Mr. Emberley has published a series of eight drawing books for children. He shows how to draw easy step by step drawings using shapes, numbers, and letters. (This book might even help teachers learn to draw.)

Some of his well-known drawing books are:

ED EMBERLEY'S DRAWING BOOK OF ANIMALS

ED EMBERLEY'S DRAWING BOOK OF FACES

ED EMBERLEY'S LITTLE DRAWING BOOK OF FARMS

(Compiled by Sharon Peterson, Concordia College, Bronxville)



# NLSA Powerful Practices



## Our Savior's Lutheran School, Springfield, Ill. Curriculum Chairs – Sharing Leadership

*Jill Gerberding, Principal*

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden” (MATT. 5:14).

**F**or decades, Lutheran schools have been shining lights in Christian education for the world to see. Lutheran schools share and teach the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. They partner with families within the sponsoring Lutheran church to “Train up a child in the way he should go” (PROV. 22:6) and they are an outreach into the community to witness and bring the Good News. Our schools serve as a ministry. But what makes people take hold of the ministry? Usually before a ministry can be effective, it must meet a need. Those who are hungry, must be fed. Those who are cold, must be clothed. So what are the needs in our neighborhoods that make community or unchurched families want to attend a Lutheran school?

Every three years we survey our parents and ask why they picked Our Savior's Lutheran School for their child to attend. Consistently the top three reasons are

1. a Christian environment,
2. academic excellence and
3. a safe and nurturing environment.

Traditionally for Lutheran schools, those three needs were easy to accomplish as many public schools were stagnant and academics sometimes low. Although there is still a debate over the value of standardized testing, there is no doubt that the incorporation of standardized testing has improved the academics of many of our public schools and has made them accountable. This has caught some of our Lutheran schools lacking in academic excellence and keeping up to date with the best educational practices and



*Left to right: Our Savior's Lutheran School's principal, Jill Gerberding, with curriculum chairs, LaJean Harkins, Nancy Bray and Amber Bahr.*



**Left:** Math and technology curriculum chair, LaJean Harkins, works with new teacher, Phillip Heppe. **Right:** Science curriculum chair, Amber Bahr, oversees a student STEM project.



teaching strategies. The reality is, if your Lutheran school is located in an area where there are good public schools with good academics, your Lutheran school must have everything the public schools offer and more.

This can be a challenge for small- to moderate-size Lutheran schools that usually have one principal and one school secretary. How can a principal build academic excellence and be the authority on all curriculum areas when she must also be the leader of spiritual life, the leader in public relations and communications, the leader in student recruitment and admissions, the leader in school financial planning, the leader in student and classroom management, the leader in educational resources, the leader in working with boards to develop policies and procedures, the leader in teacher recruitment, the school leader who attends countless church board meetings and committee meetings, the leader of supervision of the academic day and outside activities and the leader of numerous other duties? There is a better way.

### **A VISION OF EXCELLENCE**

The first step is to establish an academic excellence vision with your Board of Christian Education. Develop a curriculum-review cycle where each subject area is reviewed and updated at least every six years. Determine a set of standards to follow and achieve, whether they are your state standards, Common Core Standards or the Next Generation Science Standards. Set high expectations for your faculty and students.

### **A STRONG TEAM**

Now that you have established the vision, again, how does one principal do it all, and do it well? Ronald Reagan once said, “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” A principal cannot be an expert on everything, nor does he have the time. The key to establishing academic excellence is to surround yourself with a team of experts, creating a powerful brain trust, to make excellent decisions and to create rigorous curriculum in all areas.

Within each Lutheran school are excellent, dedicated teachers who have a love or a passion for one or two of the subjects they teach. In each of your teachers, where does her love lie? Has his level of education followed his passion? Does she have a master’s degree in a dedicated or curricular area? Are there teachers who share your vision of academic excellence? Do you have some teachers who see beyond their own classroom and can be a mentor and leader for other teachers? I looked for three teachers who had three different passions — one in Language Arts, one in Math and Technology, and one in Science. I designated each one a curriculum chair over one area of expertise and added Social Studies to fit under Language Arts.

### **EQUIPPED TO SERVE**

First, you have to empower your curriculum chairs with the proper tools. As Lutheran school teachers, we often serve our church and school with many activities or responsibilities outside our classroom as part of our call and without additional compensation. However, it is important for your board to show they



Language arts and social studies chair, Nancy Bray, observes fellow teacher, Phillip Heppe, as he teaches his 5th grade writing class.

value the curriculum chairs and give them a stipend. This gives your chairs a sense of value and also makes them accountable to do the job well. Then, give your chairs opportunity for professional development. If they are to lead the way in best educational practices, they must know the current research. During the first year of developing his chairs, the principal should go to professional development workshops and conferences with them to be sure they all share the same vision. Next, let your chairs take individual or small groups of teachers to workshops and conferences. It is important that the chairs go along to workshops so that good discussion can develop and your teachers will see their curriculum chairs as leaders and also as valuable team members.

The last tool to give your curriculum chairs is decision-making opportunities. Give them your trust. They can make good decisions. Give them security in their decisions. Let them know that “I have your back” in those tough decisions. Give them empathy. Leadership is not always as easy as it looks. Understand their frustrations. Finally, be the “heavy” when they need it. They are still teachers and their fellow teachers may not always want to follow their paths to excellence. Sometimes the principal needs to step in and correct a teacher who may not be following the chair’s lead or directions.

## STRUCTURE AND STANDARDS

It is also important to develop a structure for your team of curriculum experts. As the principal and leader, develop a job description that gives your chair a clear picture of her responsibilities. A good job description should include training and keeping current on subject practices and topics. It should include expectations that the chairs meet periodically with fellow teachers as a mentor and advisor. The chairs should develop a curriculum mapping format and work with the teachers in writing a mapping that meets standards and flows from one grade level to the next. The job description should include purchasing power for classroom resources and a professional development library.

As a part of the curriculum team, the principal should establish a meeting schedule and agendas, both with individual curriculum chairs and also for group/team meetings. As a team, develop teacher workshops or in-services. It is important to develop the trust of the team so that they can depend on you and each other.

Over all, the structure of using curriculum chairs to establish a sound curriculum works for our teachers. Our teachers have adapted to our structure and have recognized the strengths of the curriculum chair format of leadership. Included among those strengths mentioned by our teachers are incorporating the gifts of others to better lead. Teachers have multiple leaders from whom they can seek help and counsel. This also gives faculty more feedback from multiple observations and conversations. Our teachers genuinely see our chairs as mentors and co-teachers to bounce ideas off of and to help problem solve areas of weakness or concern. It has been said that many hands make light work. Paul in 1 Corinthians writes, “For the body does not consist of one member but of many” (12:14). Teachers passionately working together, sharing ideas, supporting and helping each other and giving each other direction and guidance make the outcome of curriculum development better and help to create excellent Lutheran schools, which shine as a city on a hill.

Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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PHOTO: OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL



# Parent Pages

RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



## Healthy Teeth, Bright Smiles



**P**roverbs 25:19 makes a comparison between bad teeth and a treacherous man. This is a fair comparison given the amount of grief caused by tooth decay and infection. The best way to avoid teeth treachery for your children is to indulge in good dental care both early and often.

Dentists and other specialists recommend that checkups begin around twelve months of age. A dental checkup is part of your children's overall health because problems with teeth and gums can cause other health issues. Starting checkups early will allow your dentist to prevent problems and will begin to instill healthy dental habits for your child's lifetime. The added benefit of starting checkups this early is that infant check-

ups typically happen while the child sits in a parent's lap as the dental staff slowly introduce tools. This helps the child to connect feelings of security and interest with visits to the dentist's office.

While an infant will likely only remember the emotions connected to a dental visit, older children will be more curious and perhaps anxious because of a previous experience or because they are leery of medical visits. It might be helpful to look for a pediatric dentist with extra training in techniques for working with children. When your child asks what will happen, refrain from details and warnings. Just tell the simple truth that the dentist will use special tools to check and clean teeth. If your child is overly worried about pain, call ahead and give

the dentist a warning. Overall, it is good to teach your children that they can trust the dentist and hygienist so they will be less likely to be reluctant or worried.

Even though it is tempting, avoid the promise of a reward for good behavior. This may signal to the child that there is something to worry about. Instead, listen to your child's concerns and respond with reminders that you will be close and God will be even closer. During the appointment encourage your child to ask questions, and when the appointment is over point out the ways your child acted bravely by listening and following directions.

Building good dental habits is every bit as important as regular dental checkups. Here is a list of recommended practices for babies, toddlers and older children:

#### **BABIES:**

- › Clean gums with a soft cloth and begin with an infant-size toothbrush when that first tooth pokes through.
- › When teeth appear check for white or brown spots.
- › Avoid allowing baby to fall asleep with a bottle as this can cause tooth decay.

#### **TODDLERS:**

- › In the beginning, mom or dad should be in charge of the toothbrush. Talk about each area as you brush it so your child will learn the routine. When preschool-age children want to brush by themselves, allow them to do so and start the routine of checking their work and finishing up.
- › Use a brush with soft bristles and purchase a new one every three months.
- › Use a very small amount of fluoride toothpaste and teach your child to spit so toothpaste is not swallowed.
- › Do your brushing routine at least twice each day and start flossing early.
- › Limit sweets, especially sweet drinks like juice and soda. If there is not time to brush immediately after sweets, then teach your child to rinse and spit.



#### **OLDER CHILDREN:**

- › By school age your children should be in charge of their daily dental health with periodic checks from you. Young children might feel more in charge if they are allowed to pick out their toothbrushes and toothpastes at the store.
- › Purchase a timer, or find a timer app, to encourage your child to brush for a full two minutes, cleaning all sides of the teeth and the top of the tongue.
- › Teach your child dental terms such as incisors (front teeth), molars (back teeth), plaque (bacteria that eats away at teeth) and gingivitis (gum disease). New vocabulary is always good as well as knowing the reasons why teeth need care.
- › Send a travel toothbrush and toothpaste to school for use after lunch. Let your child's teacher know.
- › Purchase a mouthguard for athletes. Replacing a permanent tooth is complicated and expensive, but losing a baby tooth too early will also cause problems.

If there is a family history of tooth decay or gum disease, it is especially important to start good dental habits and checkups early. Dental care will not change genetics, but it will help to reduce the severity of problems and help teeth to last longer. Teaching good dental habits works like teaching anything else worth learning. It requires practice, patience and modeling. The happy smile is the reward.



# Professionally Speaking



## Whom Shall I Fear?

*“The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom shall I fear?”*

*The LORD is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?” (PS. 27:1).*

**N**ow well into the school year, what fears have been substantiated? What new fears have reared their ugly heads? Are any of the following similar to your list of fears?

**1.** “Mrs. O has an agenda and the agenda is me.” Past experience tells you that Mrs. O has been a challenging person in the school’s community. Be it as a thorn for the school board or as an instigator of insurrection against the beloved first grade teacher, Mrs. O has earned a reputation so that if she enters the building, suddenly lights go off and doors are closed. This summer, rumor has it that you will be her project as enrollment has taken a dip and her dear friend has pulled her child from the school.

**2.** The budget deficit just got larger. You and the board passed a challenging budget. It included no change in enrollment and its corresponding fees and tuition. After all, the town has not seen much of the economic upturn that neighboring cities have seen. The budget also included a substantial increase in third source funding. The annual fundraising event has seen steady increases in profits so the trends showed an optimism worth adding to the budget. While no capital improvements account had yet been adopted by the board, the school facility showed no sign of issues. Of course, that was before the new-to-the-job city inspector showed up and decided to make a name for himself and find all kinds of violations that would need immediate attention.

**3.** “That other school’s problem has become everyone’s problem.” Maybe this isn’t fair to think, but you did. You had a hunch that the inattention to striving for the best at ABC Lutheran down the street would cause a problem for them, and they DID get a low accountability grade. The resulting negative publicity was targeted to all the private schools in the region.

**4.** CEO, AD, Counselor, Dean of Students, instructional leader and coach, etc. ... oh, and spouse, parent, sibling, citizen and child of God. Summer was supposed to be a time to regroup and revitalize, but when Dad fell ill and needed weeks of attention, suddenly the school year was upon you and you realized you were still exhausted in mind and spirit from the year before.

What other fears come to mind as you lead your school? Any retirements coming up that will need to be addressed through a depleted workforce? As your rural



community continues to experience a smaller population, is there a fear of steadily declining enrollments? With the greater accountability expectations of schools regarding safety, does your school meet the tests?

As quoted above, David writes, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Whether David wrote this as he first became king or he wrote this in the close of his days on earth, David provides two major insights for school leaders.

First, he saw God as God and all that this means. Oh, this can be so tough for school leaders! As we are in such a strong “product and result” environment, we are easily swallowed up into a need for proving the value of our schools, our programs and even ourselves. This can quickly take the life out of ministry and make it a tremendous burden.

David’s words here remind us that school ministry, and our service within that ministry, is a reflection of Christ and Christ alone. David’s declaration of “The LORD is my light” is recognition of God as THE giver of every perfect gift, including daily bread, and the source of all goodness and blessing in life. While schools of any age level must be of quality to serve their families, their reason for existence distinguishes itself as Christ’s work and His impact on lives. This doesn’t minimize the responsibility of doing our best with the gifts that God gives us, but it places priorities in the right place.

Second, David embraced that he *reflected* the Light in his life ... and it was not of his own accord but all thanks to God. With the confession that God is Light



(not just a giver of light), and the confidence that Light has power over all, including darkness of all kinds, we, too, can follow with David’s words of “whom shall I fear?” It’s liberating to know the past, present and future are in God’s providential care. It’s also a powerful reflection that we have. Just as a full moon can washout any number of shining stars, so our reflection of God’s love is a great influence in our community.

So how does this impact ministry as we deal with contentious people and situations? *Stay in the Light.* We know it; we teach it; we often fail to live it. Time gets away from us and we miss our personal devotions, our prayer time and sometimes even worship and Bible study. This allows shadows to come into our lives. Instead, put times with God on your schedule and make them a greater obligation than the monthly board meeting, weekly faculty meetings and quarterly voters’ meeting!

Blessings to you as you find yourself lifted up (Ps. 27:6) and as you confidently share the Light.

## Professionally Speaking // OCTOBER 2018

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Mark Muehl Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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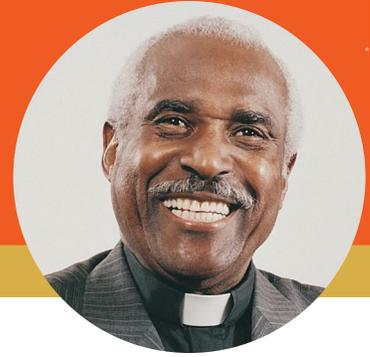
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# School Shepherd

TIPS AND SUPPORT FOR PASTORS OF CONGREGATIONS WITH SCHOOLS



## REAL. PRESENT. GOD.

### The School Shepherd: Real and Present

*“Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2–3).*



The Good News is that God’s grace in Christ has been made real and present in the waters of our baptisms. God’s Word in Romans, Chapter 6, confirms that we have been buried with Christ and raised from the dead to live a new life. God’s forgiveness in Christ is as real as the saving work of Christ and the power of the Word that brings that work to each of us. The Sacrament of Holy Communion celebrates the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. God in Christ is real and present for each of us. The school shepherd lives and serves in God’s grace.

### The Calling to Serve

The shepherd’s calling in Christ is real. The rite of ordination affirms the calling, “[Candidate] has been called by the Lord of the Church into the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments ...” (*Lutheran Service Book Agenda*, p. 161). In the rites of ordination and installation, the calling of the Spirit is witnessed and celebrated. The school shepherd is not fulfilling some human administrative role, but he is called into the place of ministry by the Spirit through the church. The pastor is present in the church and school ministry setting by God’s calling. The school shepherd can confidently say, “God has called me here. I really belong here.”

The pastor in a school ministry humbly represents Christ in the varied school activities. Little children sometimes get confused in the personhood of the pastor. Pastors have been called “God” or “Jesus” as children see them in their robes and in worship service contexts. While quick to clarify their true human identity, the pastor is also reminded to represent the

**T**he “Be yourself!” advice of contemporary culture is inadequate and inaccurate. The “self” is selfish. The school shepherd confesses with the flock, “We confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone” (*LSB*, Divine Service, First Setting). The devil, the world and our sinful flesh are present. Our sins are real.

Shepherd humbly and respectfully. Children can see Christ in His school shepherd.

### Real and Present Service

Secure in his identity in Christ and his calling as an undershepherd, the pastor in a Lutheran school can be both real and present in various school roles and contexts.

Be real. Synonymous expressions might include: be repentant, vulnerable, genuine, relatable, humble and approachable. Being real is balanced with being pastoral and professional. The pastor does not need to publically share every weakness of himself or his family. The pastor does not disclose those things which may reflect poorly on his person or ministry. The real shepherd can be heard to make statements like:

- 🗨️ I struggle with that too.
- 🗨️ I'm sorry.
- 🗨️ Let me help you with that.
- 🗨️ I'm sad with you.
- 🗨️ I'm happy for you!

Be present. "Presence" is being visible and accessible in a variety of school and church contexts. The present school shepherd asks:

“ Send, O Lord, Your Holy Spirit On Your servant now, we pray;

Let him prove a faithful shepherd That no lamb be led astray. Your pure teaching to proclaim, To extol Your holy name,

And to feed Your lambs, dear Savior, Make his aim and sole endeavor. ”

(LSB 681, v. 1)

- 🗨️ How can I be more present for all staff members?
- 🗨️ How can I be more present for children and families?
- 🗨️ How can I be more present in the community?
- 🗨️ How can I represent and advocate the school ministry to the community and congregation?

The school shepherd is open to dialogue with elders, school boards, staff and families about his presence in the school ministry. Only Jesus is omnipresent. The pastor's presence in school ministry contexts is balanced by his care of self, duty to family and other personal and pastoral responsibilities. The school shepherd cannot be present at every school function. However, the ministry to the children and families of the school is important and should be a high priority.

The school shepherd is real and present in partnership with the Lutheran school principal. It is important that there is frequent dialogue among the ministry team members to share celebrations and concerns. The concern and support in leadership should be evident to all constituents.





# Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



## Children's Anxiety: It's Real

**M**t any adults enjoy thinking back to their childhood days of playing with friends and experiencing great amounts of freedom and fun. Childhood memories might include favorite foods, places and even music. When you are reminded of something from your childhood, how do you feel? Does it stir up fond memories that brighten your face with a smile? Do you try to replicate those memories for yourself or your family? Or, perhaps, do these memories bring up feelings of discomfort or even anxiety?

The September 2018 issue of *Time Out for Directors* focused on the anxiety teachers and leaders in Lutheran schools may experience. This issue will discuss the anxiety that young children may have. Some adults may have a difficult time believing that a young child can exhibit anxiety, but the truth is that children are anxious about many things in their lives. These anxieties can result in behavioral concerns, loss of sleep, loss of appetite or toileting issues.

For young children, trust, security and love are needed from caregivers — parents, other family members, teachers, etc. The trust that forms between a child and a caregiver allows the child to experience a calming security knowing that his needs will be cared for. An infant is not able to feed herself; however, she knows that she can nurse from her mother or receive a bottle from her father. A dim light in the bedroom at night helps produce a sense of security for children who are afraid of the dark. Physical contact and verbal communication between children and adults allow children to know they are loved, valued and important. Just as Christ has reminded you of His love (John 3:16), children need the same reminder; they need to know that God loves them too!

Just as adults rely on securities that potentially diminish the anxieties of their environment, so do children as they look to the structures and routines that have been set before them by loving caregivers. Routines, familiarity and



strong relationships with people they see often provide the opportunity for children to be at ease in their environment. In the Bible, Ps. 46:10 says to “Be still, and know that I am God.” Here, the psalmist is reminding Christians to relax, for God is paving the way for trust and care.

Sadly, recent studies completed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shared that nearly one-third of teens reported regularly experiencing feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Anxiety and depression are present in young children, too, and need to be carefully monitored and addressed should significant concerns be present. As an educator and caregiver, you have a significant responsibility to provide holistic care for those children in your classroom or school.

What exactly causes young children to experience anxiety or sadness? While there are multiple reasons why a specific child may exhibit signs of anxiousness, it's important for educators to allow opportunities for children to engage in experiences and behaviors that help diminish or eliminate the potential for anxiety. Educators need to know when to intervene and when additional supports may be necessary.

Some common instances that may produce anxiety in young children include:

### Arriving at school:

While children typically enjoy being at school or child-care, there can be feelings of uneasiness and uncertainty. Mornings can be rough for young children. The hurriedness of waking up, eating breakfast, traveling to school and saying goodbye to mom or dad is a lot to happen in just a few short hours. While children know these things will happen, they can still be difficult for children who are still learning to identify and manage emotions. To help, teachers can make arrival times familiar and comforting. Be sure to greet each child individually, to be gentle with your approach and to provide reassurance that parents will be back at the end of the day. Provide opportunities for children to engage in meaningful activity soon after arriving; even resting on a comfortable chair can be meaningful for an anxious child. These tips may seem simple, but they are extremely important.

### Eating at school:

For some young children, eating at school can be stressful. School-eating is different than home-eating. There are more people at school, and likely more sounds too. Foods at school may be unfamiliar, or items from home may need to be opened with assistance from other adults. Hungry children are not the most patient, but eating at school requires patient, self-regulatory behaviors. To help, teachers and caregivers can again be consistent with school-eating routines, provide many verbal comments about what will happen and is happening and lighten the mood by playing music or encouraging peer interactions by helping one another and talking with one another.

### Sleeping at school:

Yes, sleep is meant to be peaceful and restful, but the setting at school is very different for some children who are used to being in their comfortable beds with familiar surroundings. The added number of people in the room can make it difficult for some children to rest peacefully. There may be too many distractions. To help, teachers and caregivers can evaluate the sleeping environment and make sure that it is conducive to rest. Having children bring a blanket or stuffed toy from home to cuddle provides a sense of security and comfort. Some children also find sleeping

with a picture of their family beneficial. Letting children choose their resting spaces might be a good option for some because it lets them take control over something age appropriate and meaningful to them.

### Playing at school:

Many educators believe the social interactions children have at school today are different than in the past; the play they experience is different than play of a few decades ago. Today, with smaller families, some children have more parents (and grandparents) than they do siblings. This makes sharing, turn-taking and appropriate social interactions more difficult for some children. When a child is used to having only adults play with him, or is accustomed to having any toy she wants, concerns regarding self-regulation can arise. Children need to learn resiliency, empathy and inhibitory control that allows them to self-soothe and “let things go” when their way or desire is not followed.

Children need to have the sense of security that there is control and stability in their lives. Interestingly, today’s society places the wrong kind of control in front of children at too young of an age. The best way for children to learn self-control is, ironically, not to always control them. The avenue in which children can experience age-appropriate control is through high-quality pretend play experiences. Unfortunately, the amount and quality of pretend play in which children engage in today is decreasing rapidly. Today’s early childhood professionals must commit to being cheerleaders for freely chosen pretend play. Through the experiences and interactions of pretend play, children are better equipped for the “busyness” and multiple transitions they experience each day.

Thankfully, Christians know where the ultimate strength and stability is found — Jesus! As the hymn shares, “My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness” (*LSB* 575). So true it is! As a teacher in a Lutheran school, it is important for you to point children in the direction of Jesus. As you model for them and share how you look to Jesus, so, too, these little children begin to learn the love and reassurance that faith in Christ brings. *Ps.* 105:4 shares, “Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!” God is real. God is present. God is faithful. Only He can provide peace and calm in a world filled with sin. As the apostle Paul says in *Heb.* 12:2, look “to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”



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