

SEPTEMBER 2019

SCHOOL MINISTRY

Mailing



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

School Ministry



SEPTEMBER 2019

SCHOOL MINISTRY MAILING

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Alight

FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS



Lutheran Schools are Full of Joy!



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 THESS. 5:16-18).

It's the beginning of another school year in Lutheran schools across the nation. It is Sunday morning and my church home is celebrating the opening of its 171st academic year of Lutheran education. The opening hymn, “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us” (LSB 711), is a touching beginning for the celebration of its school which welcomes students in a few short days. The congregation is joyful.

New teachers are introduced. Educators are consecrated and affirmed by the congregation for the coming year. A former student of the school is commissioned and installed to teach fourth grade. God continues to provide for the church's mission with talented staff members who daily share the Gospel message with children and families. A teacher shares, “My school is a place where the love of Christ is evident. We reach out with the Good News that

Jesus died for our sins and rose again.” The faculty and staff are joyful.

Home visits, classroom tours, teacher meetings, orientations and new family picnics set the foundation for the new school year. Anticipation, excitement and a little anxiety continue as the first day of school approaches. Students prepare with new school supplies, classroom scavenger hunts, tablets, books, pens and paper. A student shares, “I love my school because they help me extend my relationship with God. The school is like another family to me because I know I can trust them.” The students are joyful.

The first day of school brings families to campus, dropping off paperwork and supplies and walking their children to classrooms. First day pictures are taken as parents entrust their children to teachers, confident of the education and care that they will receive throughout the year. A parent shares, “I thank God for our Lutheran school; the staff both present and past make this a beacon of light in our community.” School communities are joyful.

This year, over 200,000 preschool through grade 12 students in 1,950 schools across the nation, and 4,500 students in international schools in Hanoi, Hong Kong and Shanghai, head to classrooms where they will experience the fullness of joy in Jesus. With Jesus to shepherd and guide faculties, God's Word is explored through a myriad of school events, experiences, study, prayer, song and worship. Joy through Jesus is proclaimed and once again children are blessed to hear the beautiful Gospel message of God's promise of eternal life. Rejoice always!



Computer File



What is Next in Technology?



When I travel around the country working with Lutheran schools, educators and districts, one of the most repeated questions that I receive is “what is the next thing in technology?” Usually, the individual asking the question has a certain aspect of technology in mind, such as projectors, interactive whiteboards, classroom management tools, communication tools or the “latest and greatest.” After hearing this question come up time and time again in different variations, it became apparent that it would be good to focus on where certain “broad stroke” technologies are going in education in the coming years. Thus, the Compute File articles for the 2019–2020 school year will be taking a look at the following topics over the next eight months:

October: Student Resources

November: Interactive Whiteboards

December: Student Devices, Pt. 1
(Strategy and Implementation)

January: Student Devices, Pt. 2 (Hardware)

February: STEM/STEAM/STREAM

March: Assistive Technology

April: Data, Data, Data

May: The “Learning Model” and Technology

First, a disclaimer. As much as all of us may wish we possessed a crystal ball, I am in the same boat as the rest of you regarding predictions of what is coming. Instead, the information I will present will reflect current trends in education and reference specific movements in and out of the classroom to shed light on how the educa-

tional technology industry seems to be leaning. That being said, please remember that new technologies, integrations and ideas are being worked on every day, so we may all be surprised by something in the next years or even tomorrow that we didn't see coming!

In order to consider where technology may be going, it is best to look at where it has gone over the course of previous years. Let's start with an exercise. Pick one of the topics we will be looking at this year that you work with in your school or classroom. Got one? Ok, now think back over the last few years (or further) and consider how that technology has changed or impacted different aspects of your teaching or educational ministry.

I chose to think back on November's topic of "Interactive Whiteboards." When I was in college learning to be a classroom educator (not *that* long ago!), interactive whiteboards were just starting to become a trend in education, although they were still prohibitively expensive, especially for smaller schools and many privately-funded schools. These devices changed curricula, impacted teacher preparation courses and forced teachers and administrators to rethink how classrooms were physically designed. However, fast forward one short decade (or a single cycle of students moving from kindergarten to 8th grade) and the interactive whiteboard is beginning to phase out of many institutions in favor of new devices. In that short amount of time a technology was embraced, implemented, utilized and discarded. Once we stop and think back like this, it becomes obvious that the last few years have seen enormous changes in educational technology. Thus, a reflection on the past can certainly tell us something about where a technology may be heading as well.

As we explore each topic in the coming articles, it is important to begin by reflecting on the following two questions:

Question #1: What led to this technology's relevance in education? Why was it assigned value in the classroom or implemented in the way it was?

Question #2: How are you using or implementing this technology in your classroom or school at present? If you are not directly interacting with the topic at hand, how is it impacting you in other ways?

After reflecting on each of these questions, you are then ready to jump into each article. We will be sure to reference these questions as we start each month, so make sure you take time to reflect before (and after) reading.

These are exciting times, especially if you are interested in continuing to see how technology is impacting education in our Lutheran schools and elsewhere today. Be sure to take



note of the schedule of topics to determine which ones will impact you the most and share your thoughts with your coworkers in education as well. I would bet that they are impacted by educational technology just as much as you are, and may have even asked once or twice, "what is next in technology?"



Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7



JOYFULLY LUTHERAN 1 THESS. 5:16–24

FOCUS: Jesus. Others. You.

Jesus and Children

(MARK 10:13–16)

Before You Teach

At a time in biblical history when child mortality was high and the value of children low, Jesus countered the culture of the day, elevating the place of **O**thers in society, and specifically that of children. Jesus warned of consequences to those who fail in the culture’s collective responsibility toward all children. **Y**ou have an important role in the lives of children. As you relate to them throughout the day, ask yourself regularly and often, “What would Jesus do? How would Jesus respond? What would Jesus take delight in?” May your time together serve as a blessing to all!

Greeting

Dedicate time to greet each child upon entry into the classroom. Statistically you have just 5 seconds to set or reset a positive tone for the day. The importance of this time ought not to be underestimated.

Gathering

YOU WILL NEED: a designated worship area, a table or altar, a cross and/or an image of

Jesus, a battery-operated candle, the songbook *Little Ones Sing Praise*.

Do: Light the altar candle. Signal children to gather in your worship area.

Sing: Teach and sing the “Gathering Song” (*LOSP*, p. 8).

Tell the Story

Practice the chant “**Jesus! Jesus! We love You! ...**” (See Activities: “Do”). Signal children to chant as indicated.

Moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas were bringing noisy, happy boys and girls — big children, little children and babies — to meet Jesus. All were excited to meet Him. (**Chant:** “**Jesus! Jesus! We love You! ...**”) The moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas wanted Jesus to bless each and every child. The disciples, thinking they were helping Jesus, scolded the moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas and even the children, shouting, “Go away! Jesus is too busy for you!” (**Chant:**) The noisy, happy boys and girls — big children, little children and babies in their



mothers' arms — did not stop! (**Chant**). The disciples shouted even louder, "GO AWAY! JESUS IS TOO BUSY FOR YOU!" (**Chant**). But, Jesus LOVES children! Seeing what the disciples were doing and hearing their shouted words, Jesus called to the disciples, "LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME! DO NOT STOP THEM!" (**Chant**). Jesus welcomed the excited children into His arms, and blessed them. Jesus loves all children! JESUS LOVES YOU! (**Chant**).

PRAY TOGETHER

Show children how to use their hands to create a "hand heart" (fingertips touching, thumbs touching). Pray, guiding children to repeat each phrase of the prayer after you.



Dear Jesus,
Your great love is here for all. You love children big and small. I love You and You love me. Love is here for all to see. Thank You, Jesus, for Your love, sent to us from heav'n above. Amen.

Remember the Story

BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

Pre-K & K; Gr. 1 & 2: "[Jesus said], 'Let the children come to me; do not [stop] them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God'" (MARK 10:14).

ACTIVITIES

Create: You will need: precut dinner-plate-size construction paper circles (one per child). Note: Colors should reflect the varied colors of the children's skin tones. Guide children to add facial details to the circles, which would reflect their

expressions upon meeting Jesus face-to-face. Display with the words: "Jesus! We Love You!"

Do: Teach and chant together:

*Jesus! Jesus! We love You!
And we know You love us too!*

Sing: "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (LOSP, p. 94); "Jesus Loves Children" (LOSP, p. 108)

Sending

Gather the children in a "sending circle." Review the day. Remind the children of your care for them, and more importantly the love and care Jesus has for them. Repeat the prayer with hand-heart actions. Speak a blessing to each as they exit: "*Jesus is with you wherever you are and wherever you go.*"

Live the Story

The plight of migrant children, their care or lack thereof, has become a national focus. We must ask ourselves, "What is our role in advocacy for the care, safety and education of children?" We must consider our own words and actions as we care for, teach and elevate the important place of children in our homes, schools, churches, communities and the world. Let us set the standard, following Jesus and striving to bless ALL children who come into our presence, just as He did.

"[Jesus] took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms he said to them, 'Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me'" (MARK 9:36-37).



Early Childhood Devotions

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Writer: Dr. Judith Christian Designer: Lisa Moeller

NOTE: You will need the songbook: *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House (CPH), St. Louis, Mo.

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Family Matters

A CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS



JOY:FULLY LUTHERAN

Joy ... as School Begins



For many children, going back to school is not necessarily a sad occasion. For nearly every parent, however, having a child go back to school is often a happy occasion.

Kids want to see their friends, to do extracurricular activities that their schools offer and to enjoy the opportunity to be challenged to learn new things. Parents appreciate the routines that the school calendar requires, want to see their children grow and learn and enjoy the opportunity to see their fellow parents too.

Let's not forget the teachers! They, too, enjoy many aspects of returning to school — getting back to a set routine, imparting knowledge through instruction and

getting to know a new class of students that they will journey ahead with in the year to come.

What brings joy?

Sometimes situations bring joy. Sometimes we find joy in taking on new challenges. Other times we may find joy in our successes. As we grow older, we often find joy in the accomplishments of loved ones and in looking back on the many blessings of life.

Real joy for the believer is found in Jesus.

As much as the aforementioned experiences can bring joy, they are not always sustainable over time. Joy can seem to fade in and out of our lives, often based upon circumstances — but Jesus will always be there! Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. True joy is knowing that we have been redeemed by Jesus and that we are loved by Him every day, no matter the circumstances.

As parents we want to impart this truth to our children. That is perhaps one of the reasons that you have enrolled your child in a Lutheran school. It's great that our Lutheran schools have high academic standards and have strong Christian role models in their teachers and staff. We delight in our children developing Christian friends, but — most of all — the thing that brings the most joy in going back to class in a Lutheran school is that Jesus is there!

As your child goes back to school, may he find joy in many things, but — most of all — may she find joy in Jesus.



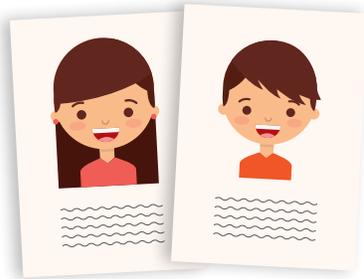
JOYFULLY UPLIFTING FAMILY ACTIVITY //

Gather the family together in a comfortable space, with no electronic distractions, and enjoy the family activity outlined below.

PROJECT TITLE: BACK-TO-SCHOOL SELFIES

PURPOSE

Everyone likes the “first day of school” photos. This activity is meant to capture the thoughts and ideas of each family member at this special moment in time.



PROCESS

- 1 Gather some white paper, at least 8½ x 14 inches in size, preferably 11 x 17 inches.
- 2 Hand out markers, crayons or colored pencils to everyone.
- 3 Have each family member draw a self-portrait. Note special features such as hair color, glasses, dimples, etc.

- 4 On the bottom of the page have each person write responses to the following:

Age _____

Height _____

Weight _____ (Optional for parents!)

Favorite color _____

Favorite movie/TV show _____

Favorite dessert _____

What I wish for most this coming school year

- 5 Have each person explain his “selfie” to the rest of the family and share responses to the points listed above.

PRAYER

Hang the “selfies” on the refrigerator or a visible place in the family home to see over the coming weeks. Have an older sibling or adult read the following prayer with other members of the family repeating the words, phrase by phrase, as the last one is hung.

Dear Jesus. Thank You for another school year. Keep us safe. Help us to learn new things. Help us to make friends and to be a friend to others. Help us to rejoice in all things! Most of all, help us grow in our faith in You. Amen.



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Family Matters VOL. 24, NO. 1 // SEPTEMBER 2019

Writer: Dr. Steven Christopher Designer: Lisa Moeller

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Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



Special Education Throughout the School Year

While it may seem like Memorial Day was just yesterday and you were sending your students off with prayers for a safe and fun summer, the new school year is upon us. Some of you have already been back with your students for a few weeks, and others are just learning the names of new students and families. As teachers, we give thanks for the opportunities of the new year that God has given us to help students grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ, but the beginning of the year can also come with concerns about students and wondering how you can set the stage for a successful year.

One challenge that affects many students with disabilities at the beginning of the year is transition. Students may be transitioning into your school and congregation from another state or another local school, they may be transitioning from the preschool into kindergarten or even transitioning to the classroom in another hallway in the same building. Even if a student has been at your school for a number of years and has seen every teacher in the hallway or at recess, the transition into a new class with a new teacher and new routines is often difficult for students with autism, ADHD, anxiety, sensory processing difficulties and other disabilities.



If school has not started for you yet, talk with parents of any students new to your room or those you may know struggle with transition, and offer a time for them to come and see the classroom and school before the year starts. Many schools have a back-to-school night or orientation, but there are often crowds of people and too much movement happening for children with transition challenges to feel reassured during these events. Find a time when the school is quiet for the child and his family to first walk through the building, find the correct way to the classroom and see the office, playground, cafeteria and other rooms the child will visit frequently. It often helps to send home pictures of the teachers or staff members along with their names before school starts so the child can familiarize herself with everyone at the school before walking in the first day. It is easy to assume that the child is familiar and comfortable with the teachers if he has been at the school previously, but seeing a teacher in the hall and being in that teacher's class daily are different experiences for many students. Taking these steps to ensure the child knows her teacher by name and sight, as well as feeling comfortable with navigating the hallways and the classroom, helps students with transition.



New classroom routines and procedures can also be challenging for students who struggle with transitions once school has started. Students of all ages need to practice new routines and see reminders about the classroom expectations. Classrooms often have guidelines posted, but, beyond the primary grades, teachers may assume that students already know and understand these and do not need additional practice. Students with disabilities need to see the classroom expectations posted, but may also need to see these modeled with frequent reminders. Visual reminders generally are more effective for these students than oral explanations by themselves. Also be aware of how expectations are phrased for the classroom and students. Students with disabilities have more difficulty understanding rules that begin with “do not” because these rarely state what they *should* do instead. Rephrase any classroom procedures or guidelines to be specific and state what the student *should* do. Also, provide a small visual next to each rule or procedure that models the expectation. Going over these procedures and expectations for the classroom on a regular basis with all students will help those who struggle with transitions and acclimate them to the new setting. If needed, take some time one-on-one with an individual student or with a small group of peers to practice new expectations until they become routine. Make sure parents also know what these expectations are and how they are being modeled at school so that they have the opportunity to practice at home as well.

Students experiencing difficulties with transition often do not “go with the flow” very easily. Having the expectation that they will simply “get used to it” frequently creates more stress and anxiety. Students may have trouble expressing this, regardless of their ages. If you see signs of anxiety, stress, misbehavior, anger or meltdowns during this time of year with a student, talk with parents/guardians about what transition strategies they may have tried at home or what has been successful (or not) in previous years. There are a variety of transition solutions that work for different students, but make sure to be consistent with your implementation and look for even small improvements in how the student is adjusting to the new school year and setting.



For more ideas about helping students transition and with other difficulties faced at the beginning of the school year, reach out to us at Lutheran Special Education Ministries for assistance. Email us at lsem@luthsped.org or visit our website at luthsped.org

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

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Writer: Kara Bratton Designer: Lisa Moeller

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Parent Pages

RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Rejoicing in Anxiety

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 THESS. 5:16–18).

Giving thanks is relatively easy when things go well, but is it possible to teach our children to rejoice when they are anxious? Certainly, we can rejoice when children learn to cope with strong emotions.

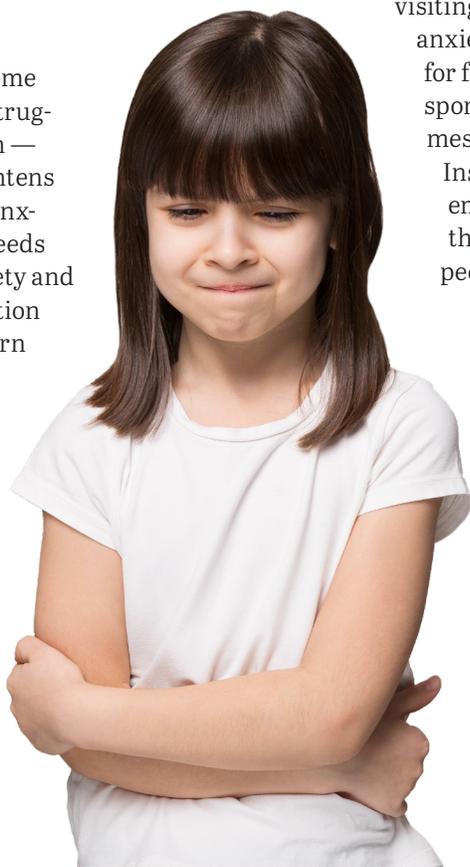
Anxiety in children is on the rise. By some measures, nearly one in five children struggle with it. Anxiety is a natural emotion — one that helps to keep us safe and heightens our awareness, but, like any emotion, anxiety needs to be regulated. The brain needs experience learning how to apply anxiety and when to replace it with a different emotion such as worry or caution. Children learn to regulate their emotions in the process of interacting with their parents. These interactions give your child feedback on the correctness of the emotional response.

Parents should respond to a child’s fears, but we should do it in a way that shows an expectation that the child can cope. The combination of “I recognize you are anxious” and “I know you can do this” gives a message to the brain that builds

confidence. Confidence is best learned in situations that involve a bit of anxiety, doubt and uncertainty. Without these emotions, confidence is not necessary, and therefore not exercised.

Anxiety can prevent children from doing things they might otherwise enjoy such as performing in front of others and meeting new friends. It can also prevent them from doing things that are important for their health such as sleeping through the night or visiting the dentist. Children who experience anxiety look to parents and other adults for feedback on emotions. If our only response is to comfort, we risk sending the message that the child’s fear is warranted. Instead, we must find a way to calm the emotion and tell the child we expect them to be able to cope. Part of this expectation is to teach them how to cope.

Imagine your child wanted to jump off the diving board into the deep end of a swimming pool for the first time. On the way up the ladder, the child becomes a bit more fearful as he sees how high he is. Standing at the end of the diving board, the child feels the full force of anxiety. If you know your child is capable of this jump, you will not climb the ladder to comfort her. It is more likely that you will cheer him from the side of the pool, offering a tip on how to make a safe



jump. You will encourage her to lean into the anxiety, knowing that once he jumps, it will be replaced with joy and pride. The result is an experience that teaches a child to cope.

Understanding when a particular emotion is appropriate is an essential step to regulating it. Parents help children with anxiety best when they acknowledge the emotion, assure the child that the emotion is not necessary and teach a coping skill. Here are some examples:

It can be a bit scary to be in your room alone in the dark (acknowledge) but we checked the room and you know it is safe (assure). I will come back to check on you in 15 minutes (teach).

I see you are worried about going to the party (acknowledge) but I would not take you any place where you were not safe (assure). Who do you know at the party who can help you feel better? (teach)

Getting a needle poke makes me a little bit nervous too (acknowledge), but I know it will only sting for a little bit (assure). I like to count to the highest number

I know. When I get to that number, the scary part is all done (teach).

Instead of swooping in and comforting, we want to stand back and help the children to build confidence. We want to help them find ways to move through anxiety. In much the same way, God does not always take away our fear. Instead, He gives us the confidence of His love and strength.

When learning to cope with strong emotions, it is a good idea to help your children to see the progress they have made. Reminding them of things that terrified them at age 3 that no longer scare them at age 5 can help them to see how they have learned to cope. This reminder is an effective way to teach a child how to rejoice even in anxiety. God uses our emotions to teach us new things about ourselves and His love for us. The anxiety, the learning and the rejoicing help children to understand the next part of the passage from 1 Thessalonians:

“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it”
(1 THESS. 5:23–24).



Parent Pages

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Writer: Dr. Kim Marxhausen Designer: Lisa Moeller

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Professionally Speaking



SCRIPTURE: 1 Thess. 5:16–24

Rejoice Always

Woohoo! Another school year is underway. The excitement of a new school year, a new teacher, new students, fresh paint, shiny floors and a clean slate brings great joy to administrators and teachers, parents and kids. It's akin to the budding flowers and new green grass of a midwestern spring. There's a newness that allows for renewed perspective and a bounce in one's step. However, the buzz-kill usually comes at midterm when the realities of grading papers, the results of classroom performance and the reactions of parents and kids come roaring in with anger, frustration and defensiveness.

It seems like an annual theme in blogs and education writings to include how to recapture joy in the classroom. How quickly our excitement can turn to gloom and doom. How quickly the joy that made us administrators and teachers is challenged with the realities of this side of heaven.

Secular periodicals and blogs suggest all kinds of well-intended and, in some ways, positive advice. In the online resource "Responsive Classroom" (responsive-classroom.org/the-importance-of-joy/), Margaret Berry Wilson suggests things like smiling, reading jokes, playing games and doing something kind for students and colleagues. Adding any of these is suggested to brighten the days of yourself and others.

In "Three Principles Living" (three-principles.com/joy-teaching-learning/), Judith Sedgeman continues the idea that, as an educator, options and attitude are not confined to the impact from environment and circumstances that happen in life. Rather, perspective and actions can be the motivating factor in addressing the certainty of adversity and challenges. Sedgeman shares, "the most important lesson I have



ever learned: The pain and the joy are not coming AT me; they are coming THROUGH me, depending on my understanding of how I hold and use my own power to think about my situation."

It's refreshing to read accountability rather than a victim philosophy. Her post has a sense of discipline and planning in mind instead of letting circumstances get the best of her.

But shouldn't there be a bit more encouragement for us as faithful Christians, dependent on our Lord and seeking His grace and blessings, to be a bit more joyful and be demonstrative of it?

This year's *Professionally Speaking* will seek to share insights particular to administrators and educators in the light of a yearlong theme of "Joy:fully Lutheran" and Paul's words from 1 Thess. 5:16–24. This month: "Rejoice always" (5:16).

Taking a bit of a study on this verse, commentators share that this English translation appearance of a command is actually an encouragement and a reminder of the faithful eyes and hearts we demonstrate in Christ. Not in so many words, Paul is saying, “In spite of everything that looks wrong and disturbing, no matter how bleak things look, no matter how frustrated you may be ... REJOICE.” Although our “boots-on-the-ground” reality may experience disappointment, frustration and even a bit of despair, we are reminded of the joy of salvation. Suddenly the offertory rings in our ears, “Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit” (LSB 192).

So, while education leaders know teaching needs joy to permeate all that is done, Lutheran schools can uniquely serve kids with a context that reflects and responds in joy to God’s grace. The uniqueness of the context of Lutheran schools is that joy comes from Christ and not in “outcomes” or in circumstances. Our joy MUST be focused on Christ.

There are so many obstacles to maintaining a uniquely Lutheran focus in our schools. However, while not explicitly stated, National Lutheran Schools Accreditation’s (NLSA) Self Study provides guidance for making this happen. Where in the study do you find indicators that support and encourage practices for teachers and principals to exhibit joy? Consider the following as you dig in to a year of rejoicing:

1:03: School leadership (administration and governing board) uses the mission statement as the foundation and reference for all planning. (This standard has an indicator of “The school’s purpose is engaged, aligned and enacted with its vision, values, school goals, learner outcomes and student activities.” Sounds like a golden opportunity to encourage joyful learning!)

1:05: The school’s purpose is displayed and reflected in school activities and in the teaching/ learning environment in classrooms. (This standard has indicators that talk about physical and virtual reminders of joyful living: signs, website, classroom decorations. Visual reminders are important encouragements.)



3B:02: The administrator meets qualifications required for the position. (“The administrator holds active membership in the congregation supporting the school and is regular in Church attendance and Bible study.” Why? Faithful, joyful leaders can’t continue with joy apart from the gifts God gives in worship and His Word.)

3B:03: The administrator is provided adequate support to complete required tasks. (Indicators address adequate time and staffing for administrative tasks. This idea finds plenty of support in Acts 6 with the apostles appointing the seven administrators. Overworked leaders struggle to find and exhibit joy.)

Professionally Speaking // SEPTEMBER 2019

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Writer: Mark Muehl Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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Rattles & Prattles

A RESOURCE FOR CAREGIVERS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS



“Rejoice always ...” (1 THESS. 5:16–24)

Bible Story: Jesus and the Children (MATT. 19:13–15; MARK 10:13–16; LUKE 18:15–17)

Focus: The children learned Jesus loved them. He hugged and blessed them.

What it teaches us: Jesus loves each of us and wants us to be God’s children, redeemed through His work of salvation.

Prepare to teach

- › **Read** the story in each of the references and, if possible, a study Bible.
- › **Think:** It was a custom at the time of Jesus for parents to take young children celebrating a birthday

to a rabbi (pastor) to bless and pray for a happy and prosperous life. How do you think the parents and children felt as they walked to see Jesus? ... were turned away? ... were welcomed by Jesus? ... returned home? ... learned of Jesus’ crucifixion, death, and resurrection?

This is a wonderful Bible story to use when welcoming children to your class. It helps them feel happy and welcomed, especially by Jesus.

- › **Pray:** Dear God, You chose me to be a teacher and caregiver for these precious children whom You created. Please help me use this story to teach Your love and how You want each of them to be Your own happy, redeemed child. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”



WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE STORY PRESENTATION

You will also need

- › *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House
- › *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, copyright © 2012 Concordia Publishing House, pp. 114–116
- › Picture of Jesus (find one doing an internet search)
- › Picture of Jesus and the children (do an internet search)

Gather for Worship

Invite the children to the worship area. Sing (tune: “Are You Sleeping?”),

Come and sit down (repeat) **on the floor** (repeat).

We will learn of Jesus (repeat) **sing and pray** (repeat).

Invocation: Use the same melody and sing: **We begin now** (repeat) **in God's name** (repeat) —

Father, Son and Spirit (repeat). **Amen** (repeat).

Opening Song

Show picture of Jesus. **Jesus loves each of us. We learn about Jesus' love in the Bible.** (Show Bible). Sing, “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know” (*LOSP*, p.42)

Bible Story

Read the story: *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, pp. 12–14; or tell the story. Draw eyes and mouths on fingernails of one hand. You may draw faces on the nails of the children. Show pointer finger and say:

Mommy said, “Come on; let's go. We'll see Jesus; Hi, ho! Hi, ho!

He'll smile and say, ‘Sit on My knee.’ We'll hug and pray happily.”

(Raise other fingers) **Mommy and the kids went on their way. Walked to see Jesus one nice day.**

Show thumb. **But, one man said, “Stop! You can't go! Jesus is busy, don't you know?”**



Show picture of Jesus and children: **Jesus smiled and said, “Oh, no! Oh, no! Come over here. Please don't go.”**

He smiled, then said, “Sit on My knee; we'll hug and pray happily.”

(put down thumb and put away picture)

Then they knew and so do we, Jesus loves us — we're SO happy.

What the Story Teaches: Jesus loved the mommy and the kids. Jesus loves us too. He loves us so much He came to be our Savior. He was hurt, died and came alive to take away all the times we are mean to each other.

Time to Pray

Dear Jesus, I'm glad You love me. I love You too. Amen.

Closing/Benediction

Sing (same melody): **Time to go now** (repeat) **Time to play** or... (repeat). **God is always with you** (repeat). **Loves you too** (repeat).

CURRICULAR MATERIALS //

IDEA STARTERS for integrating the Bible story and theme into STREAMS (curriculum)

S Science and Nutrition

- > **Science:** God gives us ears. Take a listening walk.
- > **Nutrition:** serve a travel snack, e.g. Cheerios and string cheese.

T Technology

- > **Find and view** a YouTube video of a Jesus' song; see "Worship Time."

R Reading and Language Arts

- > **Read** board book *Jesus Loves Me* by Debbie Anderson, copyright © 1998 David C Cook, or Laura Logan, copyright © 2010 Candy Cane Press.
- > **Read** *Come to Jesus* by Mary Manz Simon, copyright © 1992 Concordia Publishing House.
- > **Action Poem:** **Jesus loves grown-ups tall; Jesus loves children small. Tall, small. Tall, small; Jesus loves us all.**

E Engineering

- > **Tree cookies** (cross-cut pieces of tree limbs) or blocks. Glue pictures of Jesus and each child. "Jesus loves ... [name]" and stack, make rows or other.



A Arts (art, music and physical education)

- > **Use red paint** and brushes/fingers to paint on paper. Cut into heart shapes; glue on pictures of Jesus and children; laminate. Play games: who does Jesus love?



CONNECT WITH PARENTS in your newsletter

Families brought children to have Jesus bless them. Invite families to church to experience Jesus' love and receive His blessing. Consider making a "Blessing Tag" for diaper bags/backpacks with ID on one side and a blessing on the reverse.

- > **Songs** from "Worship Time" and "My Best Friend is Jesus" (*LOSP*, p.45).

- > **Use cadence** from "Going on a Bear Hunt" and sing "Going to See Jesus."



M Mathematics

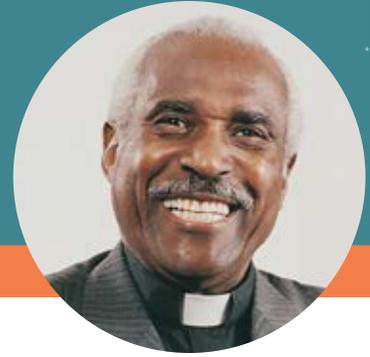
- > **Rote count:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Jesus died and came alive. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Jesus died and came alive for you. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Jesus died and came alive for me.

S Social Studies

- > **Families:** ask for pictures of each child's family. Point and name. Remind Jesus loves each one.



School Shepherd



TIPS AND SUPPORT FOR PASTORS OF CONGREGATIONS WITH SCHOOLS

THEME:

Joy:fully Lutheran

Introduction

With other partners of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Lutheran School Ministry celebrates being “Joy:fully Lutheran.” The theme energizes and directs “Chapel Talks” and National Lutheran Schools Week resources for this school year. The “FULLY” of the theme also engages the school shepherd as he serves and leads not only JOY:FULLY but also FULLY in other aspects of ministry.

Only God is truly FULL of holiness, honor, glory and every other attribute. In our sinfulness we do everything sparsely or less. However, God chooses to call us in His grace and to fill us with His Spirit. Jesus saved us and, in John 10:10, invites us to live abundantly (FULLY). May school shepherds and those who are in the “flock” of Lutheran school ministry serve FULLY with Respect, Faith, Thanks, Peace, Resources, Grace, Hope, Joy and Color.

Fill us, Lord, in Your grace and mercy so that we might do all things FULLY to Your glory and the growth of Your kingdom.

RESPECT:FULLY

The Respect FULL Good Shepherd

“My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?” (JAMES 2:1, 5).



Jesus, who was fully respectful of His Father’s desire to save the world through Him, engaged respectfully with those He was sent to serve. While Jesus challenged the hypocrisy of the self-righteous Pharisees, He respected the tax-collector, Samaritan, adulteress woman and children who humbly received Him in faith.

In response to the Good Shepherd, we respect God’s Word and God’s representatives as we love and respect one another.

Respect FULL School Shepherds

School shepherds also live under the Fourth Commandment. As citizens they are respectful of authorities in the community and beyond. They are respectful of other church leaders who serve to support and assist their ministry (Synod, District, Circuit).

The pastoral office requires respect: “We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you ... esteem them very highly in love because of their work” (1 THESS. 5:12-13). At the same time, the Pastor Epistle directs the shepherd to be “self-controlled, respectable, hospitable ... [and] gentle” (1 TIM. 3:2-3). While respect is biblically mandated, respect is also earned in the daily encounters with staff and students in the school.

In the name of and example of Jesus, His shepherds are respectful of those who serve in the teaching ministry.

Lutheran school teachers recognize the uniqueness of their role in ministry support. The “Installation of A Lutheran Teacher” (*Lutheran Service Book: Agenda*, p. 314) states, “This office has been established in love by the Church to support the Office of the Holy Ministry and to assist and strengthen Christian fathers and mothers in their God-given responsibility to bring up their children in the nurture and instruction of the Lord.” The school administration and classroom teachers respect God’s plan for Christian parents and so support parents in their vocations.

The labors of the custodian, bus driver, cook, secretary and volunteer are respected and affirmed. Typically, school families represent a variety of family situations, family dynamics and socio-economic levels. While not all life situations can be affirmed in their dynamics, each is respected so that ministry can take place.

It is important that every child enrolled in the Lutheran school is respected by the school shepherd and every other school ministry servant.

Shepherding Respect FULL School Ministry

Healthy and effective Lutheran schools are respect FULL places. The Fourth Commandment is taught and lived in the school. School policies may define and

“That all of us, Your children dear, By Christ redeemed, may Christ revere; Lead us in joy that all we do Will witness to our love for You.”

(LSB 866:5)

describe respectful behavior. Every school and every other agency responsible for protecting and guiding children has policies against bullying and other disrespectful behavior.

Children are taught to be respectful of the church sanctuary as they enter for weekly chapel services and other services and activities in the church setting. School classrooms, hallways and other areas are places where the space and the people who occupy the space are respected.

Children are taught to be respectful of their teachers and others whom God has placed over them in the school setting. Representing their school, children show respect to school visitors and to those who serve them in the community.

Parents are directed to be respectful of their children’s teachers and other school employees. While biblical guidelines and generally accepted respectful standards should be assumed, sometimes the “how” of school policies protect the school and the servants in the school.

Dialoguing Respect FULLY

- Are your church and school respect FULL places?
- How do the school shepherd and the professional staff model and teach respect in your ministry setting?



Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



Have a JOY-filled Year!



Listen. Listen carefully. Can you begin to hear the sounds of cars entering the parking lot and car doors being closed? Listen closely. Can you hear the sounds of children walking (or running) through the hallways? Now, listen even more closely. Can you hear the sounds of children giggling and perhaps even shouting (hopefully happily) at their parents? What is the meaning of these sounds? These are sounds of JOY — JOY that a new school year is beginning for many young children in schools all around the country, but especially in many Lutheran schools.

While some Lutheran schools may operate on a year-round calendar, there are often transitions even for them that happen around this time on the school-year calendar. These transitions may be new students starting at your school or students transitioning into a new classroom. Or, perhaps you have new faculty and staff that may be joining your team. Whatever these transitions, think of them as JOY-filled opportunities to build relationships and minister to others!

As a Lutheran school leader and educator, you have the responsibility, and honor, to work closely with many students, their families and the teachers who work with them. As you prepare your class lists to share with teachers, have you pondered the thoughts that go through the minds

of teachers once they see which students will be spending an entire school year with them? Some teachers may look at numbers, considering what may be “too few” students, “too many” students, or “just the perfect number” of students. Some may be looking at how many girls and boys are in their class, and some may see if they have previously had older siblings of the students they will have now. No matter what perspective a teacher has regarding the first viewing of that class list, God knows each student and family. God has placed these students in your school and individual classrooms for a special reason and purpose! God knows their names!

What do you do to help faculty and staff understand the role they have in ministering to students and their families? What role do you play in ensuring teachers see each child as a gift from God? How do you work with teachers to make sure they are meeting the needs of each student in their classes? These may seem to be somewhat easy questions to answer; however, each has a variety of answers. Take time to think through these questions carefully. Spend time praying that you are really doing the work described by the questions. You may have been intentional in your work in these areas for many years, or perhaps you are new to the role of administration and have not really thought about them. Again, spend time praying that you can support teachers in the work they do in building relationships, seeing their students as gifts from God and working with them in starting the year off JOYfully — full of JOY and great ministry opportunities!

The start of the year can bring anxious thoughts, nerves, and questions — even for the veteran teacher. As you serve in Lutheran education, you model your love of Jesus Christ in your words and actions. The relationships you build with students and families at the start of the year can either enhance or be potentially problematic for the remainder of the school year.

As Paul shares in 1 Thess. 5:16–18, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.” These are excellent, JOY-filled words to remember each day as you serve Him in Lutheran, Christian education. Yes, rejoice always! Paul did not say to rejoice only when you are happy, or rejoice only on Fridays when the school week is over. Rejoice always, and be contagious about it! Smiles and happy dispositions are priceless as they leave lasting impressions in the hearts and minds of others. By modeling a JOY-filled life, you are showing others the joy, peace and love that come from faith in Christ Jesus!

Paul also shares in 1 Thessalonians the importance of praying without ceasing. Never stop talking to God through prayer. Do not leave prayer on the back burner and wait until the end of the day. Begin your day in prayer and join in such JOY-filled thoughts and words throughout your day. Doing so may allow your day to start with abundant JOY that lasts well into the evening. Remember, prayer does not need to be set at official times, to contain long words and elaborate phrases or to be only focused on specific things. God knows your thoughts, your heart and your mind — He created you! Spend time in prayer and reflection often each day. Pray for safe travel as you and your students drive to school. Pray for health and safety while you and your students are at school. Pray for individual students. Pray for anything that comes into your mind throughout the day. Again, remember, God hears your prayer, no matter the time or topic. In addition, pray with your students. Teach them how prayer can add JOY to their lives too. How peaceful it is to know you can pass your worries on to a mighty God! How thankful it can feel to know God has heard your requests for health and recovery of loved ones! How wonderful it is to know God can be praised for all that is present in your life!

Finally, as you pray, you may find yourself giving thanks for blessings received or requests that have been fulfilled. This is good — this is JOY! Paul also shares in 1 Thessalonians to give thanks in all circumstances. Giving thanks when the “going is good” is easy; however, when we are fraught with trouble, doubt, negativity or poor health, giving thanks in ALL circumstances can be difficult. Satan wants you to think that there is little to give thanks for. Satan desires for you to question your faith and the goodness of God. Do not fall into such temptation!



It is important to know that what Paul shares in 1 Thessalonians is really a “package deal” — one of tremendous worth and value! When you rejoice in everything and constantly seek God through prayer, giving thanks in all circumstances is something that can naturally happen. When you have the perspective that “life is good,” find ways to share your faith-filled JOY and speak to God through prayer, you begin to realize how blessed you truly are! When you know that, because of what Jesus has done for you through His death and resurrection, you can proudly share that you are JOYfully Lutheran and JOYfully Christian! When others know that you proudly carry a JOY that is only found in Christ, you are doing a special type of ministry that works through building relationships. When others see your actions and hear your words, they can ask “why?” Why are you always happy? Why do you always see the glass “half full”? Why are you always so grateful? When you are asked these questions, you are provided with an opportunity to share — to share the story of what Christ has done not only for you, but also for all people.

How will you model rejoicing with your faculty, staff and students? How will you remember to pray without ceasing? What will you do to remember to give thanks in all circumstances? Challenge yourself to keep these three components of 1 Thessalonians as yearlong goals. Can you carry them out each day? Make notes, either daily or weekly, on ways you were filled with JOY as you rejoiced, prayed and gave thanks. When times get tough, and they will, bring out these reminders and know that you are loved, blessed and forgiven — all because of Jesus Christ!

Blessings on the beginning of your school year!



Time Out for Directors

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