



APRIL 2022

SCHOOL MINISTRY

Mailing





APRIL 2022

SCHOOL MINISTRY MAILING

Contents

Alight

"A Message of Hope"
Dr. Rebecca Schmidt

Community and Enrollment

"Staff Community and Enrollment"
Dr. Kristen Newell

Computer File

"Creating Robots and Drones"
Mr. Corey Nelson

Early Childhood Devotions

"Jesus' Love for All"
Dr. Judith Christian

Family Matters

"In All Things Persevere"
Dr. Steven Christopher

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

"Effective MTSS/RTI Practices for Unfinished Learning"
Dr. Kara Bratton

Parent Pages

"Be Mindful of the Ads Your Children See"
Dr. Kim Marxhausen

Professionally Speaking

"Funding the Mission in All Things"
Mr. Jim Scriven

Rattles & Prattles

"Jesus Suffered, Died and Came Alive Again
for ALL People"
Mrs. Judy Williams

School Shepherd

"All Things JOYFULLY Considered"
Rev. Robert Riggert

Time Out for Directors

"Oops... I Made A Mistake! Now What?"
Dr. Drew Gerdes



Alight

FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS



A Message of Hope

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.” JER. 29:11–13

This week, a beloved teacher passed away peacefully with the closing of her eyes. Through her steadfast faith in Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, the promise of eternal life is now hers. During her 96 years of life, she was raised in the faith, prepared for the vocation of a Lutheran teacher and served in Lutheran schools where she nurtured children and their families by sharing the beautiful Gospel message of promise and hope with the students entrusted to her care. To know her was to love her and be loved by her. Her teaching continued long after she left the classroom; she was active in her church, joyful in service and a lifelong student of the Bible. Her funeral was a celebration of a remarkable life lived for her Lord. I admired her deeply and was blessed to know her. How I will miss this beloved teacher!

Today the question is raised. Who will take her place?

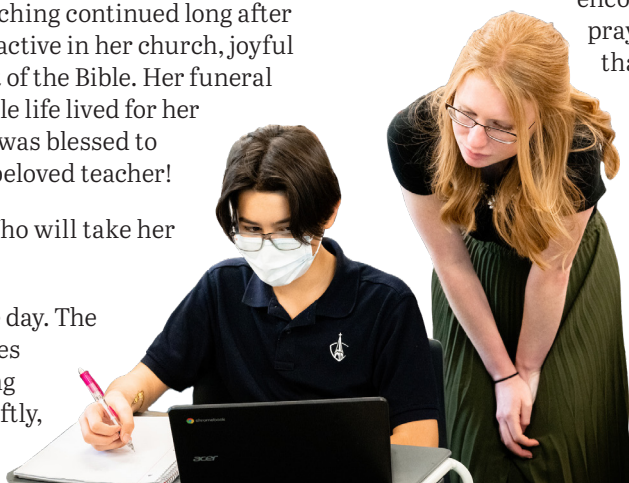
My phone rings at the end of the day. The caller begins her story and shares that she has been homeschooling her four children. She speaks softly,

“I love teaching them, but I have reached a point where I feel that they need more than what I can provide. My children want to be with other children. My husband and I enrolled them in a Lutheran school, and we are happy with the experience that our children are receiving. We have started to attend the church.” She paused and then went on, “I need something more too. I am praying for direction about the next steps in my life and I am hoping you can help me. How do you become a Lutheran teacher?”

Throughout our conversation, we talk about the Concordia University System, Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet) and balancing a home and family while exploring the possibilities for returning to school. We talk about the many ways to become involved in her church and school. She thanks me for the words of encouragement. As I think and

pray about our conversation, I give thanks for this young woman

and for the seed that has been planted in her heart. I am comforted to know that someday she, too, might be sharing the beautiful Gospel message of the promise of eternal life through faith in Christ with the children entrusted to her care in a Lutheran school. Her conversation today is a message of hope for the future.



Alight VOL. 18, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Author: Dr. Rebecca Schmidt, Director of LCMS School Ministry Designer: Frank Kohn

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PHOTOS: LCMS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD



Community & Enrollment

This is the **eighth** of a **nine-article series** developed from the work of Dr. Kristen Newell in “How is parental sense of community at LCMS elementary schools different between schools of growing, stable, or declining enrollment?”



Staff Community and Enrollment



School community is closely tied to staff community. The climate and culture of the staff community will drive the climate, strength and depth of the school community at large. Do not overlook this step in building positive, vibrant communities at your school. A whole separate series of articles could be written to detail how the four elements of sense of community described by McMillan and Chavis can be used to build staff teams.¹ But in this limited space, we will focus on how Lutheran school staff teams must use distinctly Christian methods to grow together so they are equipped to develop Christian disciples in their context.

Pray. Rest. Celebrate.

PRAY. Jesus took time to pray to the Father. If anyone could say ministry was busy, it was Jesus. He was preaching, teaching, healing and performing miracles to crowds who followed Him wherever He went. Yet as a regular practice, Jesus found time (early in the morning, throughout the day and late at night) to be in prayer with His Father. This was such a common occurrence His disciples finally requested, “Lord, teach us to pray” (LUKE 11:1). As they saw Jesus’ practice of prayer, they wanted to do as He did. The apostles exercised and developed this practice themselves; they were still doing it even after Jesus ascended into heaven. Acts 1:14 says the apostles “with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer” as they waited for the Helper Jesus said He would send.

Does your team have a practice of praying together? When things get tough do you turn to prayer as a first response or a last resort? Do you have a regularly scheduled time to pray together? How can your practice of prayer together as a staff be strengthened?

REST. The command from God to rest is present all throughout Scripture. To the Israelites in the desert, God left no option but for the people to rest on the seventh day from their gathering. He sent them manna from heaven that had to be picked up each day *except* on

the seventh day, when He sent none. To note: this did not mean the Israelites had to work harder on the sixth day to make up for their rest on the seventh. Instead, God, through His miraculous provision, made a way for the manna they gathered on the sixth day to last through the seventh.

Psalm 46:10 tells us to “Be still, and know that I am God.” Other translations say to “cease striving and know” (e.g., NASB1995). We are called by God to rest in Him, knowing He is faithful. He alone is God. And it is *His* power that accomplishes saving faith in us and in those we serve.

Jesus, who had the most important, most vital ministry of any servant God has sent or will ever send to His people, found time to rest. He even slept through a pretty crazy storm in a boat (MATT. 8:24)! Presuming that our work is so important that we cannot rest puts us in a place where we are not trusting or honoring the One who sent us to do the work in the first place. If Jesus rested, so must we.

In Acts 1 the apostles are found waiting in Jerusalem. They are not wasting their time. Jesus told them to go to Jerusalem to wait for the Helper He would send them. This time allowed them to rest. They rested so *that* they would be ready to do the great work God had planned for them.

We, too, must rest! We rest in obedience to God and His command for us to rest. We rest as we strive to live like Jesus, who also rested. We rest in trust that God will accomplish His mission through His power and not through our ceaseless work. We rest so that we are better able to serve His people. Does your staff take time to rest and play together?

CELEBRATE. God is moving. His Spirit is at work. Jesus is alive! This is cause for celebration! Capon asked, “How can we avoid a party when Jesus is around?”² Does your staff recognize how God’s power and presence are moving at your school? Do the stories you tell multiply joy? We celebrate the things we value. Are you celebrating? What do you celebrate? Without celebration, staff members burn out, feel undervalued and are less creative



than staff who party together and celebrate success. Be sure to celebrate together.

The way we build teams must look different from the way the world builds teams. We have the ability to gather as Christian disciples, grow in our faith and be sent out to serve those who walk into our schools and classrooms. Your staff should be gathering to spend time in God’s Word and in prayer on a regular basis. They must also rest well, both together and alone. Staff must spend time celebrating success: ministry success, educational breakthroughs and personal triumphs! These three things (prayer, rest and celebrations) must be priorities and personal investments practiced by each person on staff. Empty cups cannot pour out. Leaders must model the way. For staff teams to grow and strengthen, they must sit at the feet of Jesus. As we grow closer to Christ, we will also grow closer to each other and will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a part of the mission of God by spreading the Gospel to those we serve.

Footnotes

¹ David W. McMillan and David M. Chavis, “Sense of community: A definition and theory,” *Journal of Community Psychology* 14, no. 1 (January 1986): 6–23.

² Robert Farrar Capon, *Kingdom, Grace, Judgment: Paradox, Outrage, and Vindication in the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002).

Community & Enrollment

VOL. 1, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Dr. Kristen Newell Designer: Frank Kohn

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Computer File



Creating Robots and Drones



Last month focused on creating games and coding. For a good number of students, those are highly engaging, creative activities. For some, however, there is still reluctance to fully engage with those types of opportunities. Adding physical elements to these pursuits could be the thing to really open the door to creativity and engagement! This month, we're going to look at creating with robots and drones!

Using robots encourages creativity and creative problem solving. Additionally, students using robots are actively preparing for the future. As I indicated last month, more and more automation is coming every day. Robots are a key component of this automation. In schools and in real life, using robots often requires teamwork. Collaboration makes team members practice and grow in communication skills. In the process of teamwork, students learn about strengths and weaknesses — their own and those of their teammates.¹

What about drones? Robots have been a part of education for at least two decades. But drones? They are definitely a new arrival on the scene. Drones provide a direct connection to many of the content areas. Students have the opportunity to explore abstract science, physics and math concepts in a hands-on method. Piloting gives experience with aeronautics, time/distance, lift/drag and even trigonometry concepts related to elevation and distance from the pilot. Of course, experience in the photography and video areas is a unique benefit of using drones. This introduces an artistic element to drone piloting. Something must also be said for gaining a different perspective of the world around us!²

Of course, most robotics components for schools have some direct connection to coding. This will provide that motivation to learn to code for many students. Some drones have coding components as well. As I look at each suggested possibility, I'll include information on coding opportunities.

¹ wonderfulengineering.com/what-are-the-benefits-of-robotics-in-education/

² medium.com/@askdroneu/drones-in-education-how-drones-can-make-teaching-a-fun-and-engaging-experience-b844a75e78e5

mBot (makeblock.com/steam-kits/mbot) **Video:** youtu.be/vNTSZ8erDq8

My View: I have 12 of these robots ... due to the price! I also have quite a large collection of the additional components and accessories. Everything is very affordable and can give a complete robotics experience! You actually can build the robots from scratch when you get them. There is an mBot 2 which is more expensive, but it also allows transition to traditional coding as the students get older. The apps I use have block-based coding.

Concerns: There is so much available for the mBots that it can feel overwhelming! Make sure you research the accessories and have ideas for how to use them. I mean, a temperature sensor is cool ... but what are you going to do with it? Still, I think these robots are great!

Dash (makewonder.com/) **Video:** youtu.be/bihmEbvc5po

My View: I have eight of these robots, and they can be used easily from pre-K through about Grade 5. The apps for Dash are progressive. The apps move through skill levels well. The highest level includes block-based coding. I LOVE the ability to attach LEGO bricks and Technic pieces to Dash! That really opens up the opportunities for creative activities. My students love using Dash. Highly, highly recommended!

Concerns: My only thought is that it would be wonderful if Dash had more sensor inputs. The “eye” does nothing! Perhaps a light sensor?

Vex (vexrobotics.com/) **Video:** youtu.be/2RQwwegJFdg

My View: asVex knows what it's doing. There is a complete program for preschool through high school! The robots are well designed, with plenty of attachment possibilities and sensors. Vex also has competitions across the country! The programming language is also progressive from block-based to text-based. Everything here is very impressive!

Concerns: The price definitely could be prohibitive. It does have a price range similar to LEGO Robotics.

LEGO Robotics (lego.com/en-us/categories/robots-for-kids) **Video:** youtu.be/5Fa4m1XzlCA

My View: I am definitely biased in favor of LEGO Robotics. I've run our LEGO Robotics program for about eight years. If you can find funding for LEGO robots, you definitely should! The kits are very complete with LEGO pieces, sensors and motors. There is so much you can do with these robots! There are nation-wide competitions, which helps teachers find a mountain of resources and ideas to use. You can't go wrong here.

Concerns: The price definitely could be prohibitive.

LEGO Boost (lego.com/en-us/themes/boost/about)

Video: youtu.be/4YgVG9igNBE

My View: LEGO has several options other than their main robot. There are Boost and Prime, for example. Each one is targeted to a different age level, with different apps and challenges built in. With so many choices, I would suggest starting with your school's goals. If one of those goals involves finding a competition, then get the same robots as the available competitors.

Concerns: Again, while it's hard to make a wrong choice with LEGO, the price can be an issue.

Thymio (thymio.org/) **Video:** youtu.be/X-u8kcsjfnA

My View: Thymio is new on the scene. They have many great plans and are aiming directly for the education market. They include block-based and text-based coding.

Concerns: The price isn't too high, but until there are more resources available, I would wait.

Sphero (sphero.com/) **Video:** youtu.be/dM6wO1OL5sE

My View: Sphero has been around a while. I used to have several of them at school! I liked what they could do, and the apps were unique and did a nice variety of things. The original app was one of the first apps I'd seen to allow visual coding. They have expanded the resources available and now include other STEAM offerings and a curriculum.

Concerns: Considering the price, I'd go with Dash before purchasing a Sphero. They are just more limited than I'd like.

Ozobot (ozobot.com/) **Video:** youtu.be/q5SC3S2EjEo

My View: Ozobot is another long-time player in the robotics arena. These robots are small, but function at a fairly high level. The educational approach allows teachers with no coding experience to jump right in, and they advertise up to 30 lessons per grade level. Block-based coding is a strong feature, and the robots have some sensor ability.

Concerns: Again, the price per robot seems a bit high to me, but the educational component is strong. I'd suggest these over Sphero, but not instead of Dash or mBot or LEGO.

When it comes to drones, the education market is very small. There just aren't many drone makers out there trying to get drones into schools! Here are some suggestions, however:

Ryze and DJI Tello EDU (www.ryzerobotics.com/tello) **Video:** youtu.be/6yWEUdLRs4o

My View: If you are looking to purchase a drone, you

should start with DJI. If you are looking to get drones for school, this is where to start. Ryze Robotics is the manufacturer, but the drones contain DJI technology. These drones allow Scratch coding and also fly extremely well without using the coding. The price is pretty good, considering what these drones do!

Concerns: The batteries don't last long, so you'll want spare batteries ... like at least twice as many batteries as drones. Some of the best drone features aren't present, but you won't lose these drones either!

Robolink CoDrone Lite Educational (shop.robolink.com/products/codrone-lite) **Video:** youtu.be/uNYxEhRNY-g

My View: This program does look interesting! The price is similar to the DJI Tello. There is a curriculum, and block-based coding and text-based coding are part of the program. I don't have any experience with Robolink, but I'd like to try one myself!

Concerns: No real concerns, other than being more trusting of DJI due to my experience with it. This intrigues me for sure!

Parrot Mambo Fly Video: (youtu.be/uNYxEhRNY-g)

I was able to get 14 of these drones for about \$35 each. They fly well, and will connect to the Tynker app. The difficulty is getting the Tynker app on some devices. That app will allow block-based coding to control the drones! They do work very well, but they are no longer being produced.

Makeblock Airblock Video: (youtu.be/R4kLKcLAD8A)

I would really like to try one of these! This is a drone that is able to be configured into different shapes! It can fly and function as a hovercraft! Again, these are no longer being made, but if you can find them, I'm sure they would be fun!



Hopefully, you can try one or more of these ideas for creating games and code! Just have fun with it! If you show an adventurous spirit, your students will follow! Here is this month's **video overview:** drive.google.com/file/d/1AGbpWgDdI8p_I7D2Br3IpbuT7QyG4uLe/view?usp=sharing.

Here is this month's **Edge Tech!** These are some of the newest approaches in educational technology, and may require an adventurous spirit! This month's **Edge Tech** is **The Drone Racing League Game** (thedroneracingleague.com/play/) (**Video:** youtu.be/Vbiv3HbymrE). Reminiscent of the tale of If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff, this game is what happens "If You Buy a First Drone." Then, you'll want to try a racing drone! This game actually give you fairly realistic practice for flying a racing drone! Try it out!

Finally, if you would like to explore educational technology on a more personal level with other Lutheran school educators, I encourage you to consider TEC21. I'm in my fourth year of being a TEC21 Facilitator. We have stations across the country, including online opportunities and even STEM workshops! Get more information here: tec21connect.com.

Computer File

VOL. 21, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

Writer: Mr. Corey Nelson Designer: Erica Schwan

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7



IN ALL THINGS **JOHN 1:3**

FOCUS: Jesus in All (Col. 1:15–20)

Jesus' Love for All

Crucifixion and Resurrection (John 19:1–20:21)



Before You Teach

Jesus' death and resurrection is the lens through which we view all of Scripture. Here He demonstrates the love of God for all people. His arms stretched out on the cross embrace all of humanity — past, present and future — and God's gracious promises are brought to fulfillment in Him. It may not be easy to teach, but it is our privilege to put our students in touch with these core truths of the Christian faith.

Greeting

Greet each child upon arrival: **Good morning/afternoon, child of God. Jesus loves you!** Doing so establishes the child's positive outlook for the day.

Gathering

Gather in your worship area. Together, make the sign of the cross as you say, **We begin our day together with Jesus.**

Tell the Story

Search online for crucifixion and resurrection images. Show corresponding images as the narrative is told.

Jesus had been arrested, beaten and dressed in a purple robe. Soldiers made fun of Him by placing a crown of thorns on His head and saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Pilate, the governor, said to the people, "I find that Jesus has done nothing wrong, so judge Him by your own laws." The people said, "It is against the law for us to do so." Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world." Later, Pilate said to the people, "I find that this man has done nothing wrong. Shall I crucify, Jesus, your king?" The people answered, "We have no king but Caesar." So, Pilate sent Jesus out to die on a cross.

After Jesus died, He was buried in a cave. A great stone closed the entrance. On Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. The stone had been rolled

away, so she ran and told the disciples. Peter and John returned with her. When they saw that the tomb was empty, they left. As Mary Magdalene stood there, two angels asked, “Why are you crying?” Mary said, “My Lord has been taken away, and I do not know where they have taken Him.” A while later, Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you crying? For whom are you looking?” Thinking He was the gardener, Mary Magdalene said, “Sir, if you have carried Jesus away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Then Jesus spoke her name, “Mary,” and she recognized Him. Jesus was alive!

Praying Together

Sing “We pray for Each Other” stanza 3 (LOSP, P.15) to conclude prayer time.

**Thank You, Jesus, for saving me.
From sin and death, You set me free.
Loved, forgiven, I’m not the same.
Alleluia! I praise Your name. Amen.**

Remember the Story

BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

Pre-K & K: “[Christ] died for all” (2 COR. 5:15).

Grades 1 & 2: “Jesus said ... ‘I am the resurrection and the life’” (JOHN 11:25).

Activities

CREATE: EASTER BANNERS. *You will need: construction paper cut to measure 9” by 18” (one per child), 12-inch sticks or dowels (one per child), markers, glue.*

DO: Fold top 2 inches of 9-inch construction paper edge, placing a dowel/stick in the fold. Glue (or tape) the edge. Tie a length of yarn or string to dowel/stick ends. Children draw images of the resurrection on the banners (e.g., crosses, empty tomb, sun, Jesus, disciples).

SING: “Do You Know Who Died for Me” (LOSP, P. 93).

FUNDAY FRIDAY: “Colors of Spring” Walk. For younger children: Take a color walk. Periodically stop, saying, “I spy something (name a color). Children then guess

what it is. For older children: You will need a color tally card (See “Get Ready”), a set of eight colored markers for each child, an adult assistant. **GET READY:** Create color tally cards by drawing eight vertical columns on heavy-weight paper or light-weight cardboard. Reproduce and distribute to children. **GET SET:** Children use markers to make a dot at the top of each column with a color you name. Column 1. red, 2. orange, 3. yellow, 4. green, 5. blue, 6. purple, 7. brown, 8. black. **GO:** Take a color walk. Children mark the corresponding color column each time a color is seen.

CAMP SERVE: Work with your Camp Serve team to solicit donations, assemble and deliver Easter baskets to shut-ins. Include the words of Jesus found in John 11:25–26a: “Jesus said ... ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.’”

Sending

You will need: A cross to pass.

Gather in your “Sending Circle.” Review the day. Children offer a brief prayer as the cross is received or silently pass it along. Conclude by saying, **Jesus lives; our sins forgives. Alleluia! Praise His name!** Repeat with the children.

Living the Story

Celebrate every day as an Alleluia day. Jesus died and rose so we can one day sing our praises in heaven with our Savior.



Early Childhood Devotions

VOL. 26, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

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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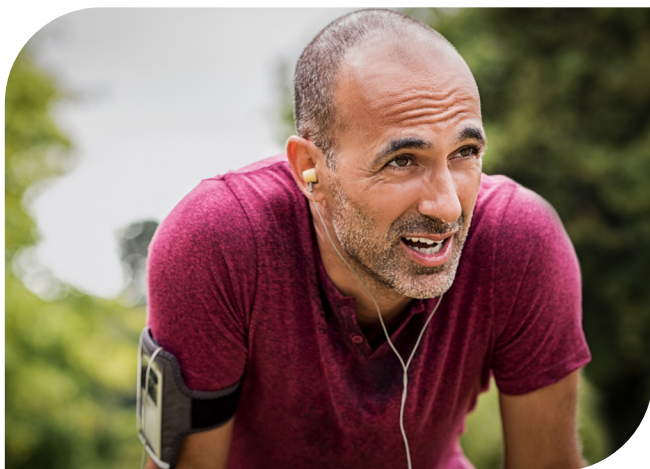
IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Family Matters

A CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS



IN ALL THINGS Persevere



“I give up. I’m done!”

These were the words of the middle-aged father of three as he was still miles from the finish line of his first half-marathon. He had trained hard — at least he thought he had — but now at mile 10, he was getting a side cramp. At first, he ignored it. When it got worse, he grabbed it firmly. The pain continued. Finally, his running companion encouraged him to slow to a walk, then stop completely and take some deep breaths. The young father didn’t want to stop running, but his friend reminded him that the focus here was not to run a certain time, but to finish. Later on, as he became a more experienced runner, he could set personal-record goals related to time. So, following his friend’s advice, he slowed to a walk, then stopped completely. He took some long measured breaths and began to feel better. He walked forward several yards, then began a slow jog. Eventually he resumed his normal gait and finished the race.

Maybe you have experienced a similar situation if you are a runner.

Maybe you’ve experienced a similar situation as a parent. Perhaps you feel out of breath in the race of life. Maybe you are feeling the “cramps” of schedule overload, finances, conflict with your spouse or sleep deprivation. It’s not easy being a parent in this high-tech, high-stress world. Sometimes you just want to say, “I give up. I’m done.”

Jesus knows what it’s like to feel the burdens of life. He was betrayed by a friend, denied by another friend. His other friends scattered when the going got tough. He was arrested and accused, given a mock trial and sentenced to a criminal’s death all within 24 hours. Yet, He persevered. He got more than a cramp in the side as He hung on the cross. Nails were driven through His hands and His feet. He found breathing difficult as the hours went by, yet He persevered. When He said, “It is finished” (JOHN 19:30), it may have looked like He failed, that He was done, especially as they took His dead body to be buried. But after a rest in the tomb on Saturday, Jesus rose from the dead and claimed victory over death and sin and the evil one. What was finished ... was the work of salvation!

As parents we persevere. We press onward in spite of lack of sleep, lack of finances, lack of time. We give our very best. Sometimes it goes well, and we feel blessed. On other occasions when it gets hard, we can always turn to Jesus, the One who went to the cross, who persevered for us. Through the Spirit we can find strength — in prayer, through worship, by reading God’s Word and through caring support. We might also find strength by perhaps stopping and taking some deep breaths, followed by a few small steps, as we continue the journey of life as a parent.

FUN FAMILY ACTIVITY //

Gather the family together in a comfortable setting, with no electronic distractions, preferably around a table (or other hard surface) to enjoy the family activity outlined below.

ACTIVITY TITLE: OUR FAMILY ENDURES

PURPOSE

To engage family members in a discussion activity that helps them understand that Jesus is our source of strength in life and to engage in fun family endurance activities.

OPENERS

Invite each family member to share a time when they have:

- Given up.
- Hung in there.

Have each person who shares give details of what happened and why he gave up or how she was able to endure and get through it all.

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Look up the following verses in the Bible and share what you think they have to say about enduring challenging circumstances and how God gives us strength to get through tough times.

- Joshua 1:9 (know that the Lord will be with you wherever you go)
- Psalm 27:14 (take heart and wait on the Lord; we don't have to go it alone)
- Hebrews 10:23 (hang on to hope in God — who is ever faithful)

FAMILY CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Find an open space in your home, in your yard or a common green area where you can enjoy the following family challenges. The purpose is see what you can accomplish together as a family. Talk about each of the following activities, and determine what you think your family total will be. Decide on who wants to do which activity and then get started! (Not everyone has to do each activity.)



Activity	Family Goal	Family Accomplishment
Push-ups	_____	_____
Jumping-jacks	_____	_____
Sit-ups	_____	_____
Jump-roping	_____	_____
Minutes standing on one foot holding he other foot up with a hand	_____	_____

Once you have completed the activities, celebrate your accomplishments as a family and give yourselves a special reward of dinner out or yummy ice cream treats.

CLOSING PRAYER

At the close of the family session, have an adult or older sibling say the following echo prayer, phrase by phrase, with everyone repeating the words.

Heavenly Father, thank You for the strength You give us, every day in Jesus. We are thankful for His death on the cross, and we celebrate His rising from the dead. Help us to always trust in You, no matter what challenges we face. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.



Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



Effective MTSS/RTI Practices for Unfinished Learning



Hopefully you are spending a good amount of time and energy focusing on the skills students have gained over the last two years and helping students recognize those strengths as well. Even with this emphasis on how God continues to give each of us gifts despite challenging times, there is obviously a need to help students who may be continuing to struggle with some skills and learning. Part of the current difficulty is determining which students may need even more assistance and which students will make positive progress with some of the previous strategies discussed for unfinished learning. This is where the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)/response to intervention (RTI) framework becomes even more important.

Schools need to have an MTSS/RTI system in place to effectively provide the right support to the right students at the right times. RTI has a very strong impact on student learning when it is implemented well. It can also have a bad name and reputation when it is not implemented well. You likely have seen the MTSS/RTI triangle (or inverted triangle, depending on the source) many times

already showing Tiers 1, 2 and 3. However, the part of this common graphic that is very important to keep in mind when thinking about the academic impact of the pandemic and unfinished learning is the percentages that typically accompany each Tier (see Figure 1).

Tier 1, shown in green, includes instruction in core curriculum that all students receive. If Tier 1 supports are effective in the areas of academic, behavior and social-emotional learning, these practices should be successful for about 80% of the students in your class. We know that another key to successful MTSS/RTI practices is having universal screening and benchmark assessments in the academic and social-emotional areas. Many schools have these tools and use results from the initial assessment to identify students who may need additional support. Sounds good, right? What many schools and teachers do not look at, however,

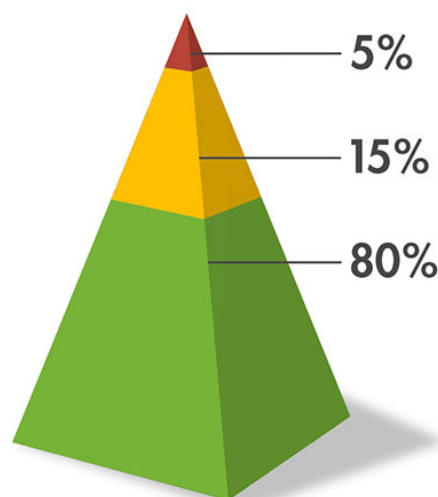


Figure 1: "Tiers of Support," IRIS Center, copyright 2021 Vanderbilt University, accessed February 17, 2022, iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/rti-math/cresource/q1/p01/.

is if results from those universal screeners are aligning with the appropriate percentages for Tier 1. Tier 1 practices should be effective for 80% of students in a typical classroom; therefore, only around 20% of students should be falling below benchmark on a universal screener. Think about the results of your universal screener from your class(es) so far this year. Did more than 20% of students fall below benchmark? If so, this means that Tier 1 practices need to be looked at before all students falling below benchmark are referred for additional tutoring or support from a resource room teacher. It is very likely right now that a larger percentage of students are falling below benchmark and for legitimate reasons. However, effective MTSS/RTI practices would identify this as a need to look at Tier 1 instruction more closely, no matter what the reason is for those scores and how understandable it is given the current circumstances.



For students who do need additional Tier 2 support, also remember that these supports are in addition to, not in place of, Tier 1 instruction. Students will not make the learning leaps needed if their only instruction involves support for skills other students have already mastered. These students need this support in addition to continued Tier 1 instruction. Progress monitoring for Tier 2 skills also needs to take place at least every other week to make sure the interventions being provided are improving students' skills in the needed areas.

This also ensures that students are not stuck in Tier 2 if they have demonstrated mastery of the skill needed. Tier 2 interventions should be skill specific. Therefore, the small groups of students needing this support will likely be fluid if MTSS/RTI is working well. Tier 2 should also include support for behavioral and social-emotional skills in a true MTSS model.

Finally, Tier 3 should be reserved for a small percentage of students who need intensive interventions to make learning leaps and address unfinished learning. Often, these may be students who even with Tier 2 interventions have not mastered standards and outcomes from previous grade levels. This year and in years following, there may be larger percentages of students who have not mastered skills from prior grade levels. Make sure that you consider Tier 3 interventions within the context of your class and the standards and outcomes that many of them may not have mastered yet. Also keep in mind that Tier 3 does not mean special education or automatically referring students to special education. Tier 3 means that students, both those that may have a disability and those that do not, need more intensive instruction in below-grade-level standards. All students should have access to all three tiers of support for academics and social-emotional learning in an effective MTSS/RTI model that is needed to move forward successfully.

While having an MTSS/RTI schoolwide model is always helpful when done well, it is even more critical to develop or refine a model to support students currently. For more ideas and information about effective MTSS/RTI practices, contact LSEM at lsem@luthsped.org or visit our website at luthsped.org and let us know how we can help!



Fearfully and Wonderfully Made VOL. 5, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

Writer: Dr. Kara Bratton Designer: Erica Schwan

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY



Parent Pages

RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Be Mindful of the Ads Your Children See

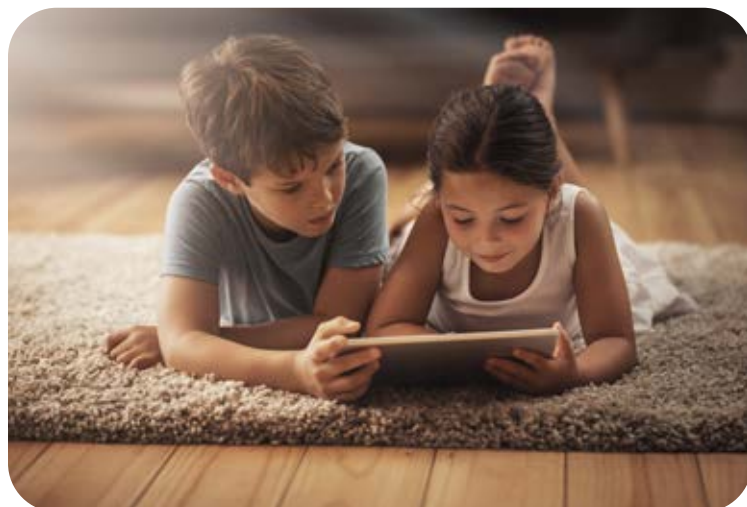
Brains are in a constant state of development because every experience creates a new or stronger neural connection. What your children do and experience determine how their brains grow. God's design for the brain helps us learn, adapt to changes and solve problems. However, this adaptability means that the brain is highly susceptible to the information our eyes and ears bring in. Therefore, it is essential to teach our children to be discerning consumers of the world. God created a perfect world, but our sin means not everything we experience has our best interests at heart.

Between television, social media and other screen activities, we become acclimated to seeing ads and we forget the impact they have. Advertisers use repetition to shape our brains into wanting what they have to sell. We may think we ignore them, but we see so many ads because, in the end, they work. Take stock of the screen activities of your children and pay attention to the ads they see. Those ads do more than make them ask you for things; the ads are shaping their brains.

The simplest example of the negative influence of ads is looking at the kinds of food typically marketed to children. Do we see encouragement toward healthy eating or a push to eat food high in sugar, fat and salt? While ads do not change taste buds, they can build an idea that eating the advertised foods will improve mood. We want our children to develop healthy eating habits that do not encourage eating to create a specific emotion. If they are seeing ads for unhealthy food, we may be fighting a losing battle.

The goal of advertising may be to sell, but emotions are how ads achieve the goal. Through sheer repetition, ads seek to shape the way a child feels about a product. This shaping of feelings is precarious for two reasons. First, children take an advertisement at face value. They cannot identify the goal of advertising, so they are more likely to believe what they hear. Second, young children have an inherent need to please others which draws them into the emotional trap of an advertisement.

The constant barrage of ads builds particular values that have potential harm. These ads want children to accept that material goods will make them happy, but happiness never comes. Materialism is a trap that produces children who have less empathy, feel deprived





and struggle to develop trust. All of these things work against what faith teaches. As Christian parents, we don't want children who believe they are loved because of what they wear, happy because of what they eat or popular because of what games they play. We want children who are content to know they are loved by their heavenly Father, saved by Jesus' death and resurrection and powered by the Spirit.

Let's consider a few suggestions for teaching children to counteract the impact of advertising. Given the multitude of ads, this is a life skill they will use beyond childhood.

- › **Question:** Teach your children to question the emotional claims in advertising. Ask them to think if the item will make them happy in the long term. Point out that ads want to sell them something, not improve their lives.
- › **Regulate:** Help your children to see the difference between using a screen as a tool and using a screen for entertainment. Entertainment mode might make them more susceptible to advertising because of the mindset entertainment creates.
- › **Discern:** Teach children to be conscientious regarding their entertainment. Help them find enjoyment in non-screen activities — especially those done as a family. For the most part, non-screen activities are the healthier option.

Help them find enjoyment in non-screen activities — especially those done as a family.

- › **Delay:** Delay permission for social media accounts for as long as possible. The mix of ads combined with the negative aspects of social media easily outweighs the benefits of such accounts. Instead, find healthier ways for your child to interact with friends.
 - › **Promote:** For young children, encourage online entertainment that does not use ads. Protect those developing brains!
 - › **Feed:** Throughout their childhood, feed the brains of your children with God's Word. Share, teach and live your faith, so God's values are what develop your child's brain.
- "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (PHIL. 4:8).
- A child's brain develops based on exposure — good things in God's creation help build brains centered on trust and gratitude. So when we share our faith with our children, when we lead them to God's Word and fill their lives with others who do the same, we are best able to help them focus on what is good and healthy. In this way, we help shape our children's brains to be what God intends for them.



Professionally Speaking



Funding the Mission IN ALL THINGS



One thing I've learned about school ministry is that there is no one set cycle of financial planning in our Lutheran schools. Some schools work on a calendar-year budget and some on a fiscal-year one, but the fiscal year may start in June, July, August or even September. Basically, each ministry figures out what works for it, and runs with it. It doesn't really matter, so long as the budget process and long-term financial planning are being done appropriately and with the attention needed so that we might bring our best to the essential work of sharing the Gospel and making disciples through Lutheran schools.

This month I want to focus on funding and the importance for the sustainability of school ministry that we fund for the future, not simply keep doing things as

they've always been done. Some of you reading this will recognize healthy financial changes that have already occurred in your settings, but for others of you, this will be something rather foreign, a paradigm with which you are not yet familiar. To ensure school ministry continues to teach the Good News for decades to come, I suggest every one of our schools will need to embrace a couple of key financial principles, whether an educational ministry operated by just one congregation or an association of churches, or even operating as an independent Recognized Service Organization (RSO).

Principle 1: Lutheran Schools are part of how we fulfill the Great Commission. Underfunding them is not an option. For many years in many different settings, we've claimed we're practicing great stewardship



of resources by trying to do as much as possible in our schools for as little as possible. With 80–90% of school expenses being staff compensation and benefits, that means we’ve “fourth-source funded” our schools, taking advantage of the commitment and calling of school staff, not paying them nearly enough. We justified this with statements such as “it’s a ministry, not a business” and “it’s the best we can afford.” But underpaying staff and failing to properly fund all aspects of our school operations comes at a great cost, as wonderful educators burn out and leave the ministry feeling undervalued or simply incapable of making ends meet. Our teachers are the greatest resource our Lord sends to our schools. We dare not waste that resource. In today’s setting, where there is a significant shortage of teachers, we won’t get the best in our schools by being cheap — if anything, we only get what’s left, and Lutheran education will lose the distinctive quality and flavor it has long been known for.

Principal 2: Prayer is not a budgeting technique.

Lutheran Schools, as well as many other Christian schools, have for too long created annual budgets with an intentional funding gap, trusting that God will provide. This is like jumping off a cliff and praying that God will catch you. God is under no onus to protect you from the folly of your choices. He blesses us with knowledge, wisdom and experience which we should use both for avoiding cliff edges and for wise financial planning in school ministries. When we budget, we need to account for our anticipated expenses, with appropriate compensation

levels and sufficient funding for depreciation, maintenance and a surplus fund for the unexpected. Then we need to develop hard funding sources to cover those expenses. Hard sources are those that are real dollars coming in: tuition, fees, before- and after-school care charges and such. Not fundraising. Not grants we hope to get. And if a supporting congregation wishes to commit to funding the school ministry to a degree, it needs to treat what it budgets as absolute, not optional if offerings fall short or new plans develop. I recommend congregation funds stay out of school operational costs. It is far better for the congregations to support facility expenses and upkeep along with other critical but behind the scenes expenses. My favorite direction for congregational support is tuition assistance — let the generosity of our members enable the school to support families who couldn’t otherwise afford our schools, using the giving to directly expand the reach of the Gospel through school ministry.

The fulfillment of this principle is that tuition and fees are set high enough so they more than cover operational costs of the school. There is no gap. We don’t depend on gifts, fundraisers and other third-source funding to squeak by. In such a way, we fund for sustainability, which is better stewardship of our school ministries than hanging out by cliffs year after year.

A better financial approach for school ministry is another way we put our Lord first in all things.

Professionally Speaking // APRIL 2022

Writer: Mr. Jim Scriven Designer: Lisa Moeller

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Rattles & Prattles

A RESOURCE FOR CAREGIVERS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS



Jesus Suffered, Died and Came Alive Again for ALL People “CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL” (COL. 3:11).

Bible Story: Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection.

Scripture References: John 19:1–20:21

What it teaches us: John, the author of the Gospel, devotes half of the Gospel to tell the story of what Jesus did for us and all people. Jesus lived, was hurt, died and came alive again for everyone, to take away all the sins of the world.

Prepare to Teach

➤ **Read** the story in the references and, if possible, a study Bible.

➤ **Think:** There are many religions in the world, but ONLY Christianity tells of a God who willingly sacrificed His own Son, who lived, suffered, died and came alive again so that, through faith, we become part of His BIG family.

➤ **Pray:** We thank You, God, for Jesus! We thank You for His love. We’re thankful that You sent Him down from heaven above. We know He is the Savior You sent from heaven too. Through faith in Him, we are Your children too. Amen.



WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE STORY PRESENTATION

You will need

- *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House (CPH), St. Louis, Mo.
- *Fingers Tell the Story (FTS)*, copyright © 1989 Concordia Publishing House (CPH), St. Louis, Mo.
- Pictures: pictures of Jesus on the cross, friends caring for Him after He died, Jesus' grave, risen Jesus and Jesus' happy friends; faces showing happy, sad, mad and scared.

Gather for Worship

Use tune of "Good-bye, Good-bye" (*LOSP*, P. 40).

Hello, Hello, He-lo-o-o, Hello, my friends, to you.

Please come here and sit with me; we'll learn of Jesus too. He-lo-o!

Invocation

Use melody from above.

Hel-lo, Hell-o, Hel-lo-o-o. Hello, dear God, to You.

We know You are our Father, God's Son and Spirit too. He-lo-o!

Opening Song: Show picture of Jesus. Sing "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (*LOSP*, P. 94),

Introduction: Use the melody of "A Tisket, A Tasket." Sing.

**A story, a story; it's time to hear a story.
It's from God's Book; we know it's true.
God gives these stories to me and you.**

Bible Story

Laminate and cut out the small pictures suggested in the "You will need" section.

(Picture of Jesus) **On a day long ago, Jesus died for us we know.**

(Picture of Jesus on the cross) **Soldiers put Him on a cross up high. People were mean as they walked by.**

Jesus' friends were sad when He died. Many were so sad that they cried.

(Picture of friends caring for Jesus' body) **Friends took Him down when it was almost night. They washed and wrapped Him in cloths so white.**

(Picture of grave) **They gently placed Him in a grave; then said "Good-bye" as they walked away.**

One day passed, two days passed. Jesus knew His death wouldn't last.

On day three, Jesus came alive you see. All His friends were SO happy.

Jesus came alive on Easter Day. Let's sing and shout a big HOORAY!

What the Story Teaches: Jesus want us to become God's children so much. He was happy to be hurt for us, to die for us and come alive for us through His resurrection.

Responsive Prayer

Teach students to respond "Thank You, Jesus, for loving us."

**Jesus, for being hurt for us (R);
Jesus, for dying on a cross for us (R);**

Jesus, for coming alive for us through Your resurrection (R).

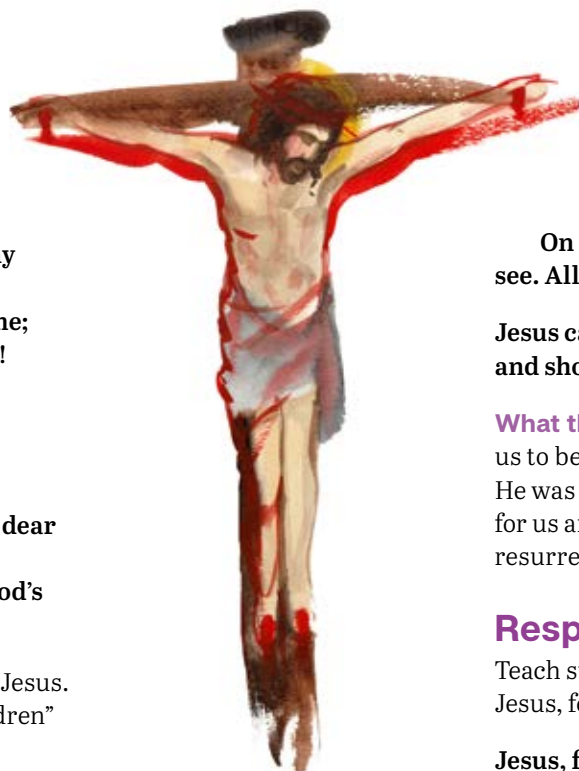
Amen.

Action Poem

Use action poem "When Jesus Died" (*FTS*, P. 30).

Closing/Benediction

Jesus' time is just about over; before we go it's time to sing "Good-bye, Good-bye" (*LOSP*, P. 40). Optional: Make the sign of the cross as pastors do at the end of the service.



CURRICULAR MATERIALS //

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

S Science and Nutrition

- **Science:** Focus on the sense of hearing, especially sounds we hear/make to express emotion, and call attention to these when reviewing the story.
- **Nutrition:** Use raisins and pieces of string cheese to make happy and sad faces on round crackers or serve hot cross buns.

T Technology

- **Play children's Easter songs** on a device while the children celebrate (see "Physical Education").

R Reading and Language Arts

- **Books:** *Where is Jesus?* by Dr. Mary Manz Simon (CPH, 1991); *The Story of Easter* by Patricia A. Pingry (Worthy Kids, 2010); *The Feelings Book* by Todd Parr (LB Kids, 2005); *Lots of Feelings* by Shelley Rotner (Millbrook Press, 2003)
- **Rhyme/Poem:** "When Jesus Died" (FTS, P. 30)
- **Action Poem:** We can smile and clap our hands. Jesus is alive. We can sing and pray to Him. Jesus is alive. He is here and everywhere. Jesus is alive! (Earl Gaulke, CPH)

E Engineering

- **Wood was used to make a cross** on which Jesus died. Provide blocks or tree cookies and encourage the children to make something from wood.

A Arts (art, music and physical education)

- **Art:** Crumple brown paper sacks. Smooth out and cut cross shapes for the children to use to make "Happy Easter" crosses. Provide a variety of media (e.g., markers, bingo dabbers, crayons, watercolors). Invite the children to choose medium and colors. **Jesus isn't on the cross. Jesus came alive on Easter.**

- **Music:** "Do You Know Who Died for Me?" (LOSP, P. 93); "If You Feel Happy" (LOSP, P. 60)

- **Physical Education:** Have children wave colorful ribbons or scarves as they run, dance, jump and so on as Easter music (see "Technology") is played.



M Mathematics

- **Counting:** Make a duplicate copy of the pictures used for telling the Bible story. Laminate and cut apart. Cut five pieces of various colors of construction paper and place the numerals 1–5, one on each piece. Laminate; cut out. Use clear adhesive tape to attach one to each of the pictures. Use with a chant: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Jesus died and came alive."

S Social Studies

- **Feelings:** Invite children to respond to one another's needs (e.g., someone gets hurt, someone is sad, someone is scared, someone is angry).

CONNECT WITH PARENTS in your newsletter

Our Bible story this month is the central truth of the Bible and Christianity: Jesus, God's Son, is the Savior who lived, suffered, died and came alive again. Through faith in Jesus' saving work, we become God's children for now and eternity.

Rattles & Prattles

VOL. 25, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

Writer: Mrs. Judy Williams Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

School Shepherd

TIPS AND SUPPORT FOR PASTORS OF CONGREGATIONS WITH SCHOOLS



THEME | JOY in All Things

All Things JOYFULLY Considered

“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (JOHN 15:11).

Jesus speaks of His joy (“that my joy may be in you”), in the context of the Upper-Room conversations with His disciples. It is only hours before Jesus goes from that setting to the intense anguish of His passion. The all-knowing Jesus is fully aware that He will be arrested, ridiculed, rejected, beaten and ultimately crucified. Yet Jesus speaks of His joy.

The writer to Hebrews described the joy of Jesus: “looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (HEB. 12:2). Jesus’ joy was saving sinners through His death on the cross.

Jesus came to save a world that was joyless in sin. The joy-robbers are everywhere. Certainly the personal and family trials (disease, death, broken relationships) rob joy. The devil seeks to plant despair and discord in Lutheran churches and schools. There is no joy in the reality of death.

The agony of the cross was followed by the joy of Jesus’ resurrection. Visitors to the tomb on that first Easter morning “departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples” (MATT. 28:8). The grief turned to joy. The world seeks holiday joy in the trimmings of chocolate bunnies, the colorful clothing and decorations or even the social gatherings. The Christian has Easter joy in the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus brings joy to every earthly context, even funeral services of those who die



“Jesus’ joy was saving sinners through His death on the cross.”

in Christ, assured that they were baptized not only into Jesus' death, but also into His resurrection.

Lutheran schools share the joy of Jesus. Because of Jesus' resurrection, it is a joyful season in Lutheran schools. While students may see joy in Easter colors and decorations and perhaps in a few days away from the classroom because of Easter or spring break, the true joy is found in hearing and living the message that Jesus is alive and that He is "seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (HEB. 8:1).

The school shepherd is a joy preacher, teacher and leader. There is joy at the baptismal font as a child is welcomed into the family of the Church. There is joy at the Lord's Table as teachers and parents gather at the feast of thanksgiving and joy. There is joy in the school chapel service and Divine Service as the Means of Grace are shared as the power of Jesus' resurrection is present.

The school shepherd joins administrators and staff in the joy of their vocation. School ministry takes place in the context of a fallen world with sinful children, parents, staff and shepherd. Many situations are not joyful: the parents who constantly challenge the child's teacher, the disputes on the playground and in the office, the school board or church council dialogue about limited resources and so on. The fruit of joy (GAL. 5:22) is brought by the Spirit to the classroom, office, playground, parent-teacher conferences and other school ministry settings.

One of the challenges of Lutheran school ministry is encouraging students to consider and answer the call to full-time church work. Seeing the school shepherd and teachers joyfully going about their tasks encourages students to follow in their footsteps. There is no greater calling and joy than sharing the Good News of Jesus' resurrection.

CONNECTIONS AND CONVERSATIONS IN ALL THINGS (with staff, board and ministry partners):

- What are the joy-robbers for you personally or professionally? How is joy restored?
- What are the unique joys of being a pastor or teacher in a Lutheran school?
- How is the joy of Jesus' resurrection shared in your setting during the Easter season and beyond?
- How are Lutheran students encouraged to consider the joy of full-time ministry? Are visits to LCMS universities or seminaries possible? Are students introduced to the mission field through contacts with missionaries?

HYMN

"With high delight Let us unite
In songs of great jubilation.
Ye pure in heart, All bear your part,
Sing Jesus Christ, our salvation.
To set us free Forever, He
Is ris'n and sends To all earth's ends
Good news to save ev'ry nation.

"Let praise ring; Give thanks, and bring
To Christ our Lord adoration.
His honor speed By word and deed
To ev'ry land, ev'ry nation.
So shall His love Give us above,
From misery And death set free,
All joy and full consolation."
(LSB 483:1, 3)

prayer

ALL THINGS IN JESUS' NAME

Jesus, thank You for the joy
of Your resurrection. Send the
Spirit of joy into our hearts, into
the hallways of our school, into
the pews of our sanctuary, and
let that joy flow from our church
and school into our community
and into the world, in Jesus'
name. Amen.

School Shepherd

VOL. 19, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Rev. Robert Riggert Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



Oops ... I Made A Mistake! Now What?



It is April. You and your students have been together for a number of months. Their social skills have increased — hopefully. Their mathematical and early literacy skills have increased — hopefully. And, they have hopefully grown in their faith too. However, have you ever wondered, “Why are my students still making the same mistakes over and over? We’ve talked about this over a million times!”? Perhaps Ryleigh still takes toys from friends, Casey still cannot raise his hand to ask a question or Vincent still forgets to start sentences with an uppercase letter.

Mistakes. Everyone makes them. But what do you do when you face mistakes made by students in your

classroom? What is your initial reaction? How do you help students understand what mistakes are? And, how do you help children learn that making mistakes leads to new opportunities for learning?

There are many famous quotes about making mistakes:

“You make mistakes. Mistakes don’t make you.”
Maxwell Maltz

“The only mistake in life is the lesson not learned.”
Albert Einstein

“Mistakes have the power to turn you into something better than you were before.” Anonymous

“An expert at anything was once a beginner.” Helen Hayes

Scripture is full of stories, too, of when mistakes were made. Mistakes are part of sinful nature. Sometimes mistakes are willful, and other times they are unintentional and are the result of weakness.

Adam and Eve didn’t do everything perfectly; they listened to the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit. Joseph’s brothers didn’t do everything perfectly either; they put Joseph into a well and sold him as a slave. And, the Israelite people didn’t live their lives perfectly, either; they began to worship a false idol while Moses was absent from them. Judas didn’t live a perfect life when he betrayed Jesus for a bag of silver.

Thankfully, Jesus died on the cross and rose again to pay the price of the mistakes, the sins, of all people. God knew when Adam and Eve sinned that there would be a need for a Savior, and that promise is shared

throughout Scripture. In all things, there is forgiveness because of Christ Jesus!

What exactly does it mean for young children when they make mistakes?

As young children become more independent and begin asserting themselves, they are bound to make mistakes. This is a natural process of growing up. Sometimes children make the mistake of pushing another child, throwing a temper tantrum, using unkind words or an angry voice, telling a lie or taking something that doesn't belong to them. What should a teacher do when mistakes are made?

A teacher's initial reaction to a child's mistake is what counts the most. You know that children will make mistakes, and you know each mistake is a teachable moment. It is very important to talk calmly with children after a mistake has been made. It is important to wait until you and the child have both had a moment to calm down before talking about what just happened. Draw near to the student using a peaceful voice and discuss the error of the mistake and the consequence it had on others or oneself. Help the child understand that while a mistake was made, he is still loved by you, others and Jesus.

Here is a short list of actions you can take following a student's mistake-making.

TEN WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN FROM MISTAKES

- 1 Acknowledge that you don't expect anyone to be perfect. Humans are sinful in nature; mistakes will always be made. Jesus forgives our mistakes because of His death and resurrection.
- 2 Let them know your love is unconditional, regardless of their mistakes or lapses in judgment. God's love is unconditional too. God's love is never ending and always present.
- 3 Don't rescue kids from their mistakes. Instead, focus on the solution. While God will forgive sins, He wants all to learn how to better serve one another, with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- 4 Provide examples of your own mistakes, the consequences and how you learned from them. Share stories from the Bible of others who have made mistakes, and be sure to point out how God still cared for and provided for them.
- 5 Encourage children to take responsibility for their mistakes and not blame others. Teach children about praying to God for help in following His commandments.
- 6 Avoid pointing out the child's past mistakes; instead, focus on the one at hand. Jesus doesn't keep track of sins; He always forgives.
- 7 Praise children for their ability to admit their mistakes. There is always a reason to celebrate when one admits a wrongdoing and asks for God's help to change.
- 8 Praise children for their efforts and courage to overcome setbacks. With God, nothing is impossible.
- 9 Mentor the children as they learn how to apologize when their mistakes have hurt others. Daily look for opportunities to teach children about compassion, kindness, care, love and all fruits of the Spirit (GAL. 5:22-23).
- 10 Help kids look at the good side of getting things wrong! While making mistakes is not always fun, it is an opportunity to learn. Share Bible stories of people who have changed their ways, such as Zacchaeus (LUKE 19:1-10).

Remember that teaching young children is a joy, privilege and journey. There will constantly be challenges, but, most often, there are abundant joys. Always remember to relish in the joys your students bring to you every single day. Look for teachable moments to help children learn about their mistakes from a faith-filled perspective. Continue to show them unconditional love, first shared by God, and remind them that making mistakes will never change your love for them, or the love God has for them!

Time Out for Directors

VOL. 26, NO. 8 // APRIL 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

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Published by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod // 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295 // 314-965-9000 // lcms.org

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