



OCTOBER 2022

SCHOOL MINISTRY **Mailing**



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD
School Ministry



OCTOBER 2022

SCHOOL MINISTRY MAILING

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Alight

FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS



A Vocation of Service

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (MATT. 28:19–20).

Martin Luther, reformer of the Christian church, was a leading advocate for the education of children. During a time when school was often limited to the sons of the wealthy, Luther argued for the education of all children. His primary purpose for this promotion was to ensure that Christians could read and understand Scripture for themselves.

Not only was Luther's passion for education impactful in 1524, it transfers to the original founding fathers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). In

1847, schools were a priority in our Synod's first constitution. The founding church fathers state, "In order for the congregation to become a member of Synod, a provision for the Christian schooling of the children is to be made." With a solid foundation, the LCMS begins with 12 congregations and 14 schools.

Today, mission outreach remains essential to Lutheran schools. Every day tens of thousands of children enter the doors of Lutheran schools across the country and around the world, many without a church home. With over 16,000 educators actively serving in early childhood, elementary and high schools, the Lutheran school is an integral part of a congregation's ministry to children and families.

In His great love and mercy, God blesses and sustains His church through the men and women serving in church work vocations. This month we take time to

***In His great love and mercy,** God blesses and sustains His church through the men and women serving in church work vocations.*



pray for and celebrate all church workers serving in our churches and schools: pastors, teachers and the many commissioned church workers, as well as business managers, administrative assistants, coaches, aides and all who are entrusted to care for children. It is a blessing to stand among this distinguished group of church workers.

From a lifetime of serving in the church, I have been blessed with the opportunity to work beside so many wonderful leaders. I give thanks for each and every church worker who has embraced this calling to serve in Lutheran education. I have been honored to serve over 40 years as a teacher, early childhood director, principal and for the past 8 years as associate director and director of LCMS School Ministry in the Office of National Mission. In each of the six schools that I was privileged to serve, I was richly blessed to work with dedicated pastors, educators and church workers who embraced their vocation of serving in the church and in Christian education. It has been a wonderful journey.

And now with prayer, many happy memories and the confidence of heeding God's will, I share my decision to retire November 1, 2022. While I look forward to all that is ahead, I take this opportunity to give thanks for the many opportunities that I have experienced and the people that I have worked with during my time in service. I have cherished it all and give thanks for what Martin Luther initiated over 500 years ago. Christian education remains as one of the most effective ways to accomplish God's command. It has been an honor and a blessing to serve a lifetime in the church and joyfully in Lutheran education.

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (PROV. 22:6).

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO WORK FOR THE CHURCH!

Professional church work vocations within the LCMS include:



PASTORS



LUTHERAN SCHOOL
TEACHERS



DIRECTORS OF
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



DIRECTORS OF
CHRISTIAN OUTREACH



DIRECTORS OF FAMILY
LIFE MINISTRIES



DIRECTORS OF
PARISH MUSIC



DIRECTORS OF
CHURCH MINISTRIES



DEACONESSES

To learn more about each of these professions, visit lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve.

SET APART TO SERVE
LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT





Community & Enrollment



Insiders and Outsiders



Have you ever been invited to a party or group only to realize you didn't seem to fit in? Despite all of your efforts at conversation and participation, you got the cold shoulder more often than an opening in the circle. These were supposed to be your people, but you are feeling left out.

Conversely, I hope you have experienced a time when others have welcomed you even when you didn't fit all the criteria for belonging in their group. For me this was a women's Bible study at a church where I was not a member. I had every reason to be left on the margins. I was a pastor's wife from a different denomination with three young children who refused to stay put in

the childcare area. Instead of being shunned or pushed aside, however, I was loved and found a connection with those women. I still was technically an "outsider," but I *felt* like an "insider."

When you look at your school community, can you identify the *Insiders*? How about the *Outsiders*? What about the people who seem to be on the inside but *feel* like they are on the outside? Or the ones who *shouldn't* fit in who feel that they do (Outsiders who feel like Insiders)? In order for families to re-enroll year after year at your school, they need to feel they belong to the community of the school. They need to feel like an Insider.

Debbie Teike, in her book *The Art of Invitation*,¹ explains four relational spaces: Insiders who feel like Insiders, Insiders who feel like Outsiders, Outsiders who feel like Outsiders and Outsiders who feel like Insiders. The book has corresponding videos. I encourage you to pick up the book, watch the videos and investigate what it means to be invitational. For now, we will look at an overview of the Insiders/Outsiders concept.

Insider/Insiders feel belonging and connection with the community. While it takes effort on both the part of the group and the individual, this depth of connectedness brings fulfillment. Insider/Outsiders are people who *should* fit in but feel uncomfortable or unwelcome within the community. This may be a church family who sends their child to the Lutheran day school for the first time. As members of the congregation, they should be on the inside but find it hard to break into the parent groups at the school.

¹ Debbie Teike, *The Art of Invitation: Building Enduring Relationships; Connecting Community* (Independently published, 2021).

Outsider/Outsiders feel completely disconnected. They feel they don't matter to the community. This feeling indicates there is a barrier between people.² This barrier might be an internal barrier of fear or hesitancy to join the community. It also might be an external barrier where Insiders are treating Outsiders differently and holding them at bay. Lastly, there are Outsider/Insiders. These people *feel* the belonging of Insiders even though they are still Outsiders. This happens when the community is welcoming and focused on relationship building. When time is spent together and people get to know each other, it allows for trust to be built. Eventually, even an Outsider finds time spent in the community feels like being with friends.

We want our students, families and staff members to *feel* like Insiders in our school communities. When they know they belong they will keep coming back to the place that fulfills them. The desire to re-enroll their students year after year has much more profound motives than academic success and extracurricular opportunities. Instead it is about the deeply human need to belong.

So how do we help Outsiders (new families, new staff and existing families who haven't yet made connections) feel like Insiders? First, we must practice extending invitation to all, even to those who are unfamiliar to us or make us uncomfortable. By doing this we show the love of God our Father, who claimed us as His children while we were still unworthy sinners (ROM. 5:8). We were the most Outsiders of Outsiders before being redeemed by Christ, and we demonstrate covenant love when we reach out to Outsiders.

The invitation we extend has to be *to something* tangible, not just the abstract idea of belonging to the community. Something involving FOOD is always a great option! Take advantage of "third things" like cutting lamination, spreading playground mulch or putting together end of the year folders that "keep two people in the same place and are mindless enough to allow [them] to engage each other in real conversation".³ Whatever it is, invite people to time spent together. Create spaces where conversations happen, people find things they have in common and individuals get to know each other. Learn to invite people out of an



We want our students, families and staff members to feel like Insiders in our school communities.

authentic desire to develop relationships, without any hidden agendas. Slowly, slowly the community will grow.

When Outsiders begin to feel like Insiders they will have opportunity to become Insider/Insiders. This last step to fully experiencing the life of the community takes involvement and commitment on the part of the individual. That doesn't mean we can't help people make that step, but we will talk about that later!

"May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (ROM. 15:5-7).

² "Relationships 101 Chapter 1, Video 4" The Art of Invitation, last accessed Sept. 10, 2022, youtube.com/watch?v=jvXaFokGaQ0&t=675s

³ Justin W. Earley, *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Books, 2021), 182.

Community & Enrollment

VOL. 2, NO. 2 // OCTOBER 2022

A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Dr. Kristen Newell Designer: Lisa Moeller

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Early Childhood Devotions

FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 7



MAKING DISCIPLES FOR LIFE **MATT. 28:19–20**

FOCUS: God chooses people to serve Him.

God Chooses Miriam

(EX. 2:1–10; EX. 14:1–15:21)

In this remarkable rescue narrative, God uses a diligent sister to guard and guide the life of her endangered baby brother. Neither Miriam nor Moses could have foreseen how God would use them both in His rescue plan for Israel. Yet, they are ultimately remembered as heroes in the story of salvation. Their youthful inadequacies and their inborn sinful natures did not dissuade God from using them for His mission. Like them, each of us has been saved to serve, destined to fulfill a role in the kingdom Jesus has already won for us. Children are important to God's plan (EPH. 2:10).

Greeting

Welcome each child upon arrival. **Good morning, [name of child], “God chooses YOU to share His love.”** These first few seconds establish the child's outlook for the day.

Gathering

Gather in your worship center. Pray. Introduce the biblical narrative. **“God chooses people to serve according to God's plan. Today we learn about God's plan for Miriam and her baby brother.”**

Tell the Story

You will need: A basket. *Do:* Search the internet for images of baby Moses in a basket, Miriam, Pharaoh's daughter, boy Moses. *Do:* Download and place images in the basket, removing and displaying each as the narrative is told.



A new king ruled Egypt. Afraid that God's people had become many and mighty he made them slaves, commanding that no more baby boys be born to God's people. Around that time a **baby boy** was born to a woman among God's people. Hiding him at first, his mother could no longer keep him safe as he grew older. Laying him in a floating **basket**, she hid him among plants growing along the river Nile. The baby's sister, **Miriam**, watched over him from a distance. One day the **daughter of Pharaoh**, the ruler of Egypt, came to the water. Seeing the **floating basket**, she sent a servant to get it. Discovering the crying **baby boy**, she said, “This is a **boy**, born to one of God's people. **Miriam** went to **Pharaoh's daughter** saying, “Shall I bring one of God's people to care for this **baby boy**? **Pharaoh's daughter** said, “Go!” **Miriam** went and brought her own mother, who was also the mother of the **baby boy**. **Pharaoh's daughter** paid the baby's mother to care for him. Once he had grown a little older, the **boy's** mother took him to **Pharaoh's daughter** who cared for him as her own son. She named the boy “**Moses**” because she got him out

SCRIPTURE: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (MATT. 28:19–20)

of the water. God chose **Miriam** to watch over **Moses**. According to God's plan, **Moses** would one day lead God's people out of slavery in Egypt, and toward God's Promised Land. God chooses us, sending Jesus to rescue us from our sin and promising heaven with Him.

Praying Together

Guide children to fold their hands, bow their heads and repeat each phrase after you.

PRAY: Father in Heaven,

Your plan for me is one of love, to be with You in heaven above. Thank You for Your loving care. Help me Your love to always share. Amen.

Conclude by together singing verse 3 of "We Pray for Each Other" (LOSP, P. 15).

Remember the Story

BIBLE WORDS TO REMEMBER

Pre-K & K: Casting all your [cares] on him, because he cares for you" (1 PETER 5:7).

Grades 1 & 2: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans ... to give you a future and a hope" (JER. 29: 11).

Activities

CREATE: Watercolor Paintings. **YOU WILL NEED:**

Watercolor paper and paint, brushes, small containers of water. **Do:** Guide children to paint with watercolors.

DISCUSS: "Why did the basket in which baby Moses was placed float and not sink?" The basket was made from plants that float, and water-proofed with tar. Baby Moses was safe and dry as Miriam watched over him, according to God's plan.

SING: "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus," *LOSP*, p. 24; "God Has Sent His Angels Down," *LOSP*, p. 26.

FUNDAY FRIDAY. Sink or Float. **PREPARATION:** Enlist volunteer assistance. Collect items that sink and those that float. Fill pans with water. Divide children into small groups. **DO:** Children predict whether an item will sink or float before placing it in water. **INVESTIGATE:** Why does an item sink or float?

CAMP SERVE. Baskets for Babies. Identify an individual or organization fostering infants. Assess and communicate needs to your church and school community. Fill and give gift baskets of baby items to these caregivers. Thank God for the opportunity.

Sending

YOU WILL NEED: A precut heart imprinted with a cross. Gather in your Sending Circle. Review highlights of the day. Invite children to pray as the heart is passed and received, or to silently pass it along. God sent Moses to rescue God's people. God sent Jesus to rescue us. Dismiss saying to each upon exiting, "Share God's saving love!"

Live the Story

The narrative of Moses and the children of Israel is a testament to God's faithfulness, assuring us that we can trust in God's timing and enduring love.



Early Childhood Devotions

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Dr. Judith Christian Designer: Erica Schwan

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



MAKING DISCIPLES FOR LIFE

Lifelong Disciples ... Grow

The school year is now well underway, and perhaps students and parents are looking forward to the completion of an educational milestone this next spring. It could be a graduation from high school, middle school or elementary school. Perhaps it's a preschool or kindergarten graduation. For some of the parents reading this, maybe you are nearing the finish of a college degree, certification or graduate school program. It's great to celebrate these types of accomplishments—no matter the age of the student.

While many receive formal religious instruction and even graduate from a Christian education institution, one never really “graduates” from growing in the faith. We don't ever arrive at a certain level of understanding where we don't need to continue to grow spiritually. While faith is not earned, but given as a gift in Baptism, it can still be nurtured through the power of the Holy Spirit. Active participation in our local congregation in worship and study can help us grow in our faith, as does personal study and family devotions. While our efforts alone do not cause growth, it's important to place ourselves and our child in settings where the Spirit of God can give new insight and understanding to our Christian walk.

Parents and other leaders in the home can be proactive in nurturing opportunities for children to grow in their faith. Some of us will plant seeds (as Paul) and others



“Lifelong disciples never graduate from the school of faith.”



will water (as Apollos), but it will be God who will bring forth the growth. What kinds of things might we do to help facilitate growth in faith? Here are three broad areas for consideration:

HEARING - Provide opportunities for children and God's people of all ages to hear the Word of God read aloud. Children love to be read to, and it is enriching for youth and adults to continue to hear God's Word. The stark reminder, "We need to hear the Gospel every day, because we forget the Gospel every day," has been attributed to Martin Luther, and causes us to pause and reconsider our day-to-day dependence on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It might be a reading straight from the Bible following a planned Bible reading schedule for your family, or it could be a portion of God's Word written in story form for children and families. It could also be hearing the lessons read at a worship service and then rereading them at home the following week.

DISCUSSION - For some of us, growth and understanding can occur when we can talk about the ideas we hear in Scripture. We love to interact with others,

listen to their perspectives about a verse, then add and share some of our personal insights. Discussions can be furthered through the guidance of a qualified instructor on the subject matter. This can happen in regular classes held at our church, specially designed growth events sponsored by our church or studies held in the homes of fellow believers.

REFLECTING - For others of us, growth and understanding can be enhanced when we are alone. We can ponder what we read in God's Word, pray over the ideas we read and consider the next steps we will take as a result of hearing these truths in Scripture. This third area of consideration may be better suited for individuals in their teen years and older.

Lifelong disciples never graduate from the school of faith. We press forward with "continuing education" until that day arrives when we matriculate from this earth into the presence of Jesus.

FUN FAMILY ACTIVITY //

Gather the family together around a table or other hard surface, with no electronic distractions, to talk and participate in the family planning activity outlined below.

FAMILY GROWTH PLAN

PURPOSE: To engage family members in a fun activity that allows them to create a family action plan for growing in the faith, which can take place for their household over the coming months.

CREATING A FAMILY FAITH GROWTH PLAN:

In the place where the family is gathered, please share the chart below, which will guide the family in creating a Family Faith Growth Plan. Take a look at each of the items, talk about them as a family and then invite each family member to vote whether they want to do this activity on a daily, weekly or monthly basis; or as a special event. Keep track of the votes in each of the boxes of the grid. Post the chart in your home where family members can see it often. Then, as a family, plan to do these faith growth events as so indicated.

As a family, close this time together by having an older child or adult read the prayer below, phrase by phrase, with family members repeating each phrase in “echo” fashion.

CLOSING ECHO PRAYER:

O Holy Spirit, guide and direct our family every day.

Help us to follow Jesus faithfully.

Help us to find ways to grow stronger in our faith.

Help us to not be too busy
to take time to hear your Word
and take it to heart.

In the Name of the Living Word,
Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.
Amen.



ITEM	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	AS SCHEDULED
Pray before Meals				
Watch Bible Story Videos				
Attend Christian Holiday Activities				
Memorize Bible Verses				
Pray at Bedtime				
Read from a Bible Story Book				
Have Family Devotions				
Go on a Faith Growth Field Trip				
Attend a Christian Concert or Show				
Other: _____				

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



Identifying the Why Behind Behavior



Last month, the idea of “kids do well if they can” from Dr. Ross Greene’s work was introduced.

Perhaps you’ve had time to think about that more and adjust to that train of thought rather than where our minds sometimes go in thinking that “kids do well if they want to.” As a reminder, if you still find yourself agreeing more with that latter statement, then we’re saying that the issue is that the child is not motivated, but has the skills needed to adaptively handle problems and frustrations. If that was the case, efforts targeted toward motivating the child, including rewards and punishment, would be more successful. My guess is that if you’re taking a few minutes to read this, the classroom or school’s current plan is not working for some students. If the same approach that works for most other students is not creating change for the students with the most concerning

behaviors, we can’t stick with the same solutions. We need to change the mindset from that of lacking motivation to that of lacking skills.

Think about a student who has exhibited concerning behaviors. It’s probably not difficult to remember a few that stand out above the rest! Now think about how you, the principal and others in the school community addressed the concerns with that student. It’s likely that because of the nature of the concerning behavior, whether it was a student yelling or throwing things or becoming violent, the behavior itself was addressed through punishment or correction. However, did this solve the problem long-term? Probably not. If we only deal with the behavior that is manifested, we’re missing the root and the *why*. A common saying among those specializing in behavior is: “If it’s predictable, it’s preventable.” How many times have you thought to yourself, “This student is going to blow!”? I bet you’re right almost every time! We’re good at predicting certain times that concerning behaviors occur, although some still catch us by surprise, but we’re not as good at preventing it. Let’s change that! The child likely wants to change his or her behavior as much as we want to see it change. We want that child to be included in our classrooms and be able to handle emotions and frustrations in a positive and God-pleasing way.

The first step is thinking of the *why* rather than the behavior itself. Remember, the *why* is not about manipulation or being stubborn, that’s the former way of thinking about behavior. The new *why* is about identifying what skills the child is lacking. This may seem easier said than done at this point! The great thing is that there is a free tool to help with this. The Assessment of Lagging



Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP) is available from Dr. Ross Greene and can be found at: livesinthebalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ALSUP21.pdf. You can also refer to the guide found here: livesinthebalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ALSUPGuide2020-1.pdf. To use this tool, talk through each skill on the list with those involved with the child and decide if it is a skill the child seems to be lacking. Since you'll be incorporating different perspectives and hopefully involving the parents, administrator and other teachers who work with the child, some individuals may identify different lagging skills than others, and that's ok. If someone in the discussion identifies one of these skills as lagging, check it off. Don't spend time trying to solve the issue of why that skill might be lacking (past trauma, family history, a formal diagnosis, etc.) as that takes you down an unproductive rabbit hole. Also, don't discuss the behavior itself when looking at this form. The behavior is the child's way of communicating difficulty in meeting expectations and is not the focus of using this tool.

When this checklist is completed, it may look overwhelming, depending on the student. Don't feel defeated by that! It doesn't change what has been there all along; you're now working with a team to identify those skills and move on to solutions. Seeing this completed list may also seem to focus too much on the negative. Always counter those negatives in conversations and meetings

with positive attributes about the child and point out the gifts God has given him or her. Start and end the meeting with those positives in a meaningful way and as you pray for the child and his or her family. Remember that using a tool like this is just the first step in looking at why behaviors may be occurring. It's one part of the process in finding solutions, it's not the solution itself. I wish the whole process could be that simple, but it's not!



Keep reading next month about the next step after identifying the skills that are lagging. If you want to skip ahead, continue to check out resources at: livesinthebalance.org/our-solution/ or contact LSEM lsem@luthsped.org or visit our website at luthsped.org Let us know how we can help you explore the gifts each child in your class has to offer!

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

Writer: Dr. Kara Bratton Designer: Lisa Moeller

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Professionally Speaking



Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

“The problem with parents is they don’t read what we send home.” Heard that one? Hope you don’t buy it, because it’s counterproductive to fulfilling your mission in the lives of your students and parents. It also isn’t a new issue.

I started teaching in 1990. Parents weren’t reading what I sent home back then either. And I was sending some pretty primo stuff, my friends. I was the first teacher at my school to get his hands on a computer and use it to create my weekly classroom newsletter. That’s right, I had my very informative class newsletter typed on my Apple IIc’s little green screen, printed on my dot matrix printer. I’d carefully tear off the ribbon edges of the paper, cut out and glue on some clip art (the real stuff, you clipped it out with scissors), then photocopied it on that new Xerox machine the PTL bought us (replacing the purple ditto machine — a mimeograph, I believe). Sent a copy home each Monday AND taped a copy to the classroom door.

Yet parents wouldn’t know things I’d communicated. Sigh ...

Truth is, children’s school needs and activities are a very small part of the overall items parents deal with each day. From work to social activities to church (maybe) to difficulties (medical, financial, marital and more), parents need to compartmentalize to make it through. Their children’s school gets attention, but limited, not nearly to the degree you imagine they would. School is HUGE for you. You practically live there



(work/life balance will be another month). For the average parent it’s on their mind when they drop off, pick up, attend a school event or when you call about a problem. Oh, and maybe when they help their children with homework.

Don’t believe me? Think I’m exaggerating? How many of you have had a parent drop a young child off while talking on a Bluetooth device, never pausing the conversation? How about that permission form that’s gone home for signing, coming back day after day never having left the backpack? Then there’s the parent who forgets to pick up their child — not just from basketball or drama practice, but literally just at the end of the school day. Oops!

These things happen. Parents are juggling many things, and a significant number are juggling more



I have good news.
The avenues for
communication are
bountiful, **tremendously
better than mine back
in the day.**

than they can handle. Balls are dropping. Some of those balls have the names of students in your school.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

How do we ensure parents know what we want to communicate: their children's progress, volunteer opportunities, ways to help their child, faith messages we try to express? Well, I have good news. The avenues for communication are bountiful, tremendously better than mine back in the day. Consider all these options:

- Notes sent home
- Email
- Phone (they travel with you these days!)
- Text (messages sent right to those phones!)
- Facebook and other social media options
- Websites (from professional school sites to free classroom pages anyone can whip up)
- Services that maximize these options, like Remind (remind.com)

It's possible one of you is reading this and feeling the need to stand on principle. *"We shouldn't be enabling parents. If we bail parents out with constant reminders by email, etc., then they'll never learn to read what we send home!"* I hope that isn't how you feel. I hope this

because the same principle applies to how we share the Good News of salvation. If we only share it one way, and it's not a way someone receives it, then we have fallen short and failed that person. We don't expect everyone to come to learn of Jesus in just one way; rather, we adapt to multiple methods to reach as many as possible. As St. Paul wrote:

"For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some." (1 COR. 9:19-22)

As with our witness, so our communication. Communicate in any ways that are helpful to your parents. And rejoice when they ask a question you've already answered in five different ways. At least now they will receive what you want them to know.

Professionally Speaking // OCTOBER 2022

Writer: Mr. Jim Scriven Designer: Chrissy Thomas

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY



Parent Pages

RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Talking with Children about Violence

As parents, we seek to create a safe place for our children to grow. Yet, we attempt to make a safe space amid a world steeped in sin and violence. When violent events happen in our community or take over our media screens, our children are left with strong emotions and challenging questions.

We may want to respond by encouraging our children to ignore the news and reassuring them that violence is far away. However, for children, the nearness of an event is not the issue. The concern is the change they have experienced in their understanding of the world. A child who sees evidence of violence somewhere in the world will wonder, “What if it happens to me?” They are not concerned with the likelihood of violence happening to them, but they are trying to understand safety in light of new information. Children of any age, when faced with an altered view of the world, will focus on personal impact. This understanding is why it is essential to address the issue. Thankfully, as Christian parents, we have tools others do not possess.

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (JOHN 14: 27).

Let’s look at each phrase in this comforting passage and connect it with God’s tools for addressing violent events with our children.

“Peace I leave with you.”

Especially when processing violent acts, Jesus directs us to His peace. This peace sits in our hearts as we discuss difficult things with our children. This peace



allows us to keep the discussion simple. We can talk about what happened and use honest words without detail. For example, telling a child that a person died is okay, but they don’t need to know all aspects of how it happened. Avoid phrases like “he passed” or “she went to sleep,” as this can cause confusion and fear. Remember that your goal is peace, so answer questions without adding new worries. Clear answers and your assurances of God’s peace will reaffirm your child’s understanding of safety. Remind your child that their Heavenly Father loves and protects them.

“My peace I give to you.”

We know the peace of Jesus because He redeemed us through the cross and grave. You build peace in your children by sharing your faith in devotions and weekly worship. All of the small discussions you have with your child, especially those that center on faith, will work to build a strong sense of peace that will help your child be resilient in the face of unsettling news. These small conversations and modeling your faith do much more for your child than you might imagine. Remind your children that their Savior is always with them.



“Not as the world gives do I give to you.”

The world does not seek to give you or your child peace. The goal of the world is to steal your peace and replace it with fear or anger. One of the best things you can do for your child to help them absorb complex information is turn off media. Your children will also pick up on your stress, so limiting your media consumption is wise. The more time we spend with the world, the less time we have for the Word. These two factors will significantly increase the damaging impact of violence. Remind your child that God’s Word is both true and eternal.

Instead of spending time on phones and tablets, lean into the healthy parts of your family’s routine. Do more things together. Take walks and talk. Play at the park. Read a book or play a game together. Connect with extended family. And eat meals together. Make a list of everyday activities — the simpler, the better. Then look at that list and consider where you can integrate the faith; where can you point your child to the love and care of God?

“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

While we cannot eliminate our fear, God has given us a beautiful way to cope: prayer. When helping your child process violence, our best tool is to teach them how to pray. Remind your child that the Spirit aids us in our prayers. Here is a simple prayer form you can teach your child:

Dear God, I am worried about (list the fear). Please help us by (list a solution). Thank you for (show God gratitude). In Jesus’ name, Amen.

This prayer is a simple form of lament, and it will help process anxiety and draw your child back to the peace of Jesus. Be sure to send Jesus your laments, also. He understands the challenges of living in a sinful world. His love and care are there for you.

Parent Pages

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A RESOURCE OF LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY



Rattles & Prattles

A RESOURCE FOR CAREGIVERS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS



God chooses Miriam.

“GOD CHOOSES PEOPLE TO SERVE HIM” (MATT. 28:19-20).



BIBLE NARRATIVE

God chooses Miriam to help Moses save God's people. She cares for him when he is an infant; and she leads the people in thanking and praising God for saving them from the Egyptian soldiers and slavery, and for leading them to a new home.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Exodus 2:1-4;
Exodus 14:21-15:21

CENTRAL FOCUS

Miriam, Moses' sister, has an important role in his life, not only when he is young, but also as Moses serves as leader of God's people. All this is a foretaste of the way God saves His people through the person and work of Jesus.

Prepare to Teach

- › **Read** the narrative in several versions of the Bible and in a study Bible.
- › **Think:** Moses led God's people from slavery. Jesus saved ALL people from a life of slavery to sin, death and the evil one, and leads them to His new home in Heaven.
- › **Pray:** Thank You, God, for choosing people like Miriam and Moses to save Your people of long ago. Thank You, God, for choosing Jesus to save ALL people. Thank You for choosing me to show my love for You as I take care of and teach the children (serve as an example). In Jesus' name. Amen.



JESUS' TIME AND BIBLE NARRATIVE PRESENTATION

You will need

- Resources: *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)* (CPH, 1989); *Fingers Tell the Story (FTTS)* (CPH, 1989)
- Worship Center: small table; picture of Jesus (search the internet or use the 8" x 10" picture from CPH (\$6.99)) mounted on wall; children's Bible (see Wednesday below); mini-posters (see Tuesday below); reproducible with four small pictures, available here: <https://files.lcms.org/file/preview/reproducible-art-oct-2022?>

Gather for Jesus' Time

Invite staff and children to join you at the Worship Center. Sing (Melody: "Mary Had a Little Lamb"):

Won't you come and sit with me, sit with me, sit with me?
Won't you come and sit with me — right here on the floor?"



Invocation

Sing (Melody: "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

"We begin in our God's name, our God's name, our God's name. We begin our God's name — Father, Jesus, & Spirit, too."

Sharing the Bible Narrative/Story

Introduction: Sing (Melody: "Mary Had a little lamb"):
"We've-come to learn about our God, about our God, about our God. We've-come to learn about our God; what-will-we learn today?" Show small pictures of the Bible story from the reproducible.

Monday Presentation: (Show Miriam and Moses.) "The Bible has a story of a little kid — like you. Miriam loved God, her mom, dad and brothers, too."

(Show Miriam watching Moses through the reeds.)
She watched her brother, Moses, as he floated in his basket-boat all day. She made sure he was safe and did not float away.

Miriam and Moses grew up; you will grow up, too.
Moses grew to be a leader of God's people; yes, it's true.



(Show the people walking on the path through the water.)
Moses showed them the road that God made in the sand. Then they walked to their new home in a far-away land.

(Show Miriam leading the people.) Have Miriam say,
"Let's sing, play instruments, dance and say: 'Thanks and praise to God for saving us today.'"

Tuesday Presentation: Reuse the poem as you show the Bible story poster showing

Miriam leading the celebration: find a picture for the poster on the internet; or use picture from *Little Lambs, Too* student pages (CPH, 1975) #5; or purchase and use a picture from an old Bible story book, such as *My Good Shepherd Bible Story Book* 1969 (p. 28).

Wednesday Presentation: Read the Bible story from a children's Bible: *Holy Bible (International Children's Bible, 2015, or The Beginner's Bible, Questar Inc. 1989, pp. 118–119; see Scripture references above).*

Thursday Presentation: Invite pastor (or teacher) to retell the story in their own words, reuse the visuals, pray and sing a song focusing on how God chooses us to be helpers, too.

Friday Presentation: Children's favorite from the week; or, have a sing-a-long of favorite Jesus' songs.

What We Learn: God loved and cared for His people long ago. He chose Moses to lead them safely to their new home. God loves and cares for us. He loves us so much He sent Jesus to save us, too. Jesus lived, was hurt, died and came alive again for us. God helps us show our love as love and care for others. Let's sing and thank God.

Song to Sing: Miriam led God's people in thanking God. Sing: "Praise Him ..." (*LOSP*, p. 68)

Time to Pray

Thank You, God, for choosing Miriam and Moses and helping them to save Your people of long ago. Thank You, God, for choosing and helping me to show Your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing/Benediction

Sing (Melody: "Mary Had a Little Lamb"): "Now it's time to sing goodbye, sing goodbye, sing goodbye. Now it's time to sing goodbye — for another day; (or) it's time for us to play."

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

S Science, Nutrition & Large Motor:

- **Science:** Miriam and Moses used their hands, eyes, ears and feet to serve and thank God. God gives us hands, eyes, ears and feet, too. Thank God. (*LOSP*, p. 29); or, focus on what might have been seen as they walked through the Red Sea (e.g., water, fish, plant life). Use a water table and put in toy replicas of plants; take out and name.
- **Nutrition:** God gives us tongues to taste. Pray before eating; serve blue yogurt with blueberries for the blue water; fish crackers (see Science above).
- **Large Motor:** Wave strips of blue plastic/cloth. Dance and sing (see Music below).

T Technology

- Search for a YouTube video of the Bible story and share it with the children for Jesus' time on Thursday or Friday. Recorded music for PE activity.

R Reading and Language Arts

- **Books:** **Books about Helping:** *My Hands Were Made for Helping* by Jaquelyn Staggs; *I Choose to be a Helper* by Elizabeth Estrada. **Books about Water:** *Big Fish, Little Fish* by Jonathan Litton; *Under the Sea* sensory book.
- **Rhyme/Poem:** "I Have Little Ears" (*FTTS*, p. 17); Nursery Rhyme: "Rock-a-Bye Baby." Change ending: "Mom will make baby a shawl: God will keep baby, cradle and all."

E Engineering

Miriam used a tambourine to play to praise and thank God. What can we use? Create instruments: clapping hands, hands tapping things in the classroom, blocks hitting each other, etc. Use instruments for Large Motor and Music activities.

A Arts (art, music)

- **Art: Crayon Resist:** use crayons to make (marks) fish and plants that might have been seen in the water as God's people walked on the path. Dip wadded up bubble wrap in light blue tempera and make prints to depict the water.
- **Music:** "I Have Hands" (*LOSP*, p. 29); It's Good to Give Thanks" (*LOSP*, p. 63); "Praise Him, Praise Him" (*LOSP*, p. 68).

M Mathematics

- Miriam used her eyes, ears and hands (fingers) to take care of Moses. Count how many you have? If you put plastic fish in water, count fish going in and swimming.

S Social Studies

Family members take care of each other. Equip the dramatic play area with items children can use to care for each other.



INVOLVING THE HOME via personal contact/newsletter (electronic or paper)

Inform the parents of the Bible story shared this month. Call attention to how Miriam and her parents kept Moses safe. Share the many ways you and your center focus on the safety of the children.



School Shepherd

TIPS AND SUPPORT FOR PASTORS OF CONGREGATIONS WITH SCHOOLS



2022-2023 THEME | Making Disciples for Life

Disciples Become Disciplers

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (MATT. 28:19).

Jesus’ followers who were chosen to be disciples were then commissioned to “make disciples.” Disciples became disciplers.

The timing of Jesus’ commission is significant. The disciples had spent three years in training. Most significantly, the Teacher, who had been “crucified, died and buried” had risen from the dead. The women at Jesus’ tomb had been told, “Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him” (MATT. 28:7). For 40 days the disciples were blessed with appearances from the risen and victorious Jesus.

Inspired historian, Luke, shares the discipling power and process, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (ACTS 1:8). Jesus’ promise was fulfilled at Pentecost and the assembly of disciples quickly grew to 3,000.

The book of Acts continues to make the discipling commission come alive: a persecutor named Saul becomes a disciple; a lame beggar on the streets of Jerusalem, an



Ethiopian traveler, a suicidal prison guard, a Philippian business woman and unnamed listeners in places like Corinth, Galatia, Rome and many other places become disciples of Jesus.

Whether the messenger was Peter at the Pentecost gathering, Stephen before a hostile audience or Paul in a synagogue or on the streets of Athens, the discipler never “made” the disciple. The disciples had the privilege of sharing the Good News with others. Jesus then makes His disciples. The Holy Spirit brings the message of the risen Jesus to the ears of the hearer and then creates and sustains the faith in the message.

Last month’s edition of the “School Shepherd” reminded the reader of the privilege of being called a disciple

of Jesus. Jesus chose you to be His disciple and to be a school shepherd. He commissions and equips you to now be his discipler in the context of school ministry.

The message of discipling is always the same. Peter's Pentecost sermon (ACTS 2:14-36) is the summary of God's working with the pages of Scripture. The message culminates, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (v. 36). The school shepherd shares the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Peter's defense before the Jerusalem Council (ACTS 15:6-21) is clear and bold, "But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus" (v. 11). The school shepherd shares the message of God's grace to all in Christ.

The means of discipling is always the same. Jesus commissions the disciples to "make disciples ... baptizing ... [and] teaching" (MATT. 28:19). A subsequent School Shepherd edition will emphasize the baptismal theology and practice of Lutheran school ministry. The school shepherd rejoices in and shares the means of grace that God has given to His church.

The context of Lutheran school discipling is both unique and varied. The school shepherd is "discipler" to: school families who gather with the fellowship of believers in worship; the school staff who gathers for a devotional/prayer time before the hectic pace of the school day; the preschool class who welcomes the shepherd to their "Jesus time"; the school assembly who gathers

for the weekly chapel service; the parent who stops by the office seeking pastoral guidance in the personal or family crisis. One of the blessings of ministry in a Lutheran school is the myriad of opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus. The "all nations" of the Great Commission is sometimes in the classrooms and hallways of the Lutheran school, as children and families from a variety of countries and cultures are enrolled. Increasingly the Lutheran school is a mission field.

Teachers give assignments. Jesus, the Master Teacher, gave His disciples an assignment: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (MATT. 28:19). Jesus also gave everything needed to complete the assignment. He gave His Word and Sacraments. School shepherds are privileged to receive the assignment from Him. Blessed by His Spirit, Jesus writes in the margins of our completed "assignments," "Well done, good and faithful servant" (MATT. 25:21).

FOR PERSONAL OR STAFF REFLECTION:

- ▶ What discipling interactions in the Book of Acts amaze you?
- ▶ Whom has God used as a "discipler" in your faith journey?
- ▶ When have you or your school been God's instrument of discipling?
- ▶ What unique opportunities is God giving for your church and school to "make disciples"?

prayer

"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."
"Then guard and keep us to the
end,
Secure in You, our gracious friend,
That in Your heav'nly family
We sing Your praise eternally."
(LSB #866, vv. 5-6)



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Time Out for Directors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ADMINISTRATORS



Will You Be My Friend?

For young children, having friends to play with each day is a big part of their joy-filled disposition and development. Children naturally have the desire to interact with others. Have you ever observed a child run to the playground, eager to join others they see? Or, have you listened while children “invite” others to their “birthday parties” over and over — even when their real birthday is months away? Or, perhaps you have witnessed children talk together about who their “first, second and third best friends” are. The truth is evident; children value being with peers and the security, and enjoyable times, that are part of the friend relationship.



Children need to interact with peers; they desire and need friendships with others. Through friendships, children learn about turn-taking, social cues and acceptable norms for communication, negotiations, resiliency, self-regulation and much more. Early and successful friendships in a child's life create a foundation for stronger levels of social interactions as they grow and mature. It is important for adults in a child's life, especially parents and teachers, to model and provide supports and opportunities for children to grow in their friendships.

The Bible is full of examples of strong and meaningful friendships. God designed friendships to be enjoyable and glorify Him. When one looks to Scripture for strong examples of friendship, you can strongly see how putting God first in a friendship serves as a way to solidify the relationship between others.

Jonathan and David

The story of Jonathan and David is a great example of love and loyalty. Take some time to read 1 Samuel, Chapter 20 for the account of Jonathan and David. Jonathan and David are amazing examples of how friendship was stronger than a family relationship; their friendship was deep and lasted a lifetime. 1 Samuel 20:42 (NIV) shares, “Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord, saying ‘The Lord is witness between you

and me, and between your descendant and my descendants forever.’” Again, God was at the foundation of their friendship.

Elijah and Elisha

Elisha had the privilege serving alongside the great prophet Elijah. Read 2 Kings, Chapter 2 for the account of these dedicated friends who demonstrated great loyalty to each other. Friendship is filled with difficult moments that question whether or not the other person is worth the outpouring of loyalty. If one follows God's leading, the miracle of selfless love can be experienced.

Ruth and Naomi

Life can be tough — even for a 5-year-old! When things in life don't go your way, it's easy to become depressed, blame others or drift from faith. Thankfully, Ruth and Naomi had each other for support. After Naomi's husband and sons died, her daughter-in-law, Ruth, stayed at her side. Ruth 1:14 shares that “Ruth clung to her (Naomi).” “Clung,” in this verse, means she “stayed

close.” From the rest of the Book of Ruth, you can read that the friendship between Ruth and Naomi was not just an “in-law” family relationship; they deeply cared for each other and also “clung” to their faith in God.

Again, the Bible is full of examples that model special friendships. Spend some time looking online for more of these examples, and read about them from your Bible. Which friendships resonate most with you? What can you learn from these Scriptural examples of friendship? What can these stories teach that will help children understand the importance of friends and friendships?

As you continue throughout the school year and reflect on “Making Disciples,” ponder the ways that friendships can lead to open hearts and minds about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As you build relationships and friendships with colleagues, parents, students and other family members, look for moments to instill a moment of faith in your actions and words with others. Look for opportunities to plant seeds of faith — making disciples — each day.

Children love pretending. They love to pretend to be the teacher, or mommy, or daddy, in so many roles of their play activities. Use a guided play approach as you, and your faculty, seek ways to encourage deeper learning and interactions between and amongst children in your class and school. Just as an adult might share, “See, you can use this bottle to feed the baby,” or, “If your friend is sad, you could share a toy with her and ask her to play,” consider weaving in words of faith and discipleship. When two children are arguing over who gets to be first in line, share “I am pretty sure Jesus would want us to take turns.” If a child is refusing to pick up toys, share “I know you want to keep playing, but let’s clean up and show



As you build relationships and friendships with colleagues, parents, students and other family members, look for moments to instill a moment of faith in your actions and words with others. Look for opportunities to plant seeds of faith — making disciples — each day.

Jesus you are a good helper. Your friends will like a clean classroom.”

Instilling and modeling a multitude of aspects of friendship is critical in early childhood. The self-regulation and social-emotional foundation of one’s life are solidified in the early years. The interactions between children “set the stage” for their success in relationships in their later years. It should also be noted that friendships suffer from hardships, too. No friendship is ever perfect, and troubles do arise. At times such as these, be sure to teach children about grace, love, repentance and forgiveness. Always point to the redeeming grace and love of Christ Jesus when troubles enter friendships. Repenting and asking for forgiveness is not always easy for young children, but it’s what Christ would have them do.

Keep the developing friendships of your students in your prayers this month. Remember, too, colleagues and those you supervise in your prayers as well. Jesus’ ministry focused much on relationships with others. It was through gentle and meaningful relationships that Christ taught others how to make disciples; you, too, can now go, teach and make disciples!

Time Out for Directors

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