

Engaged in Mission

magazine

LET THE CHILDREN COME

| SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, & TEACHERS CONTINUE TO SEEK JESUS |

SUMMER 2021



Stories about cultivating leaders intentionally engaged in loving the Lord, people, and our Lutheran theology to make disciples of all nations in the Minnesota South District and beyond.

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Students at Concordia Academy, Roseville, gather outside for Family Life Group meetings.
Photo by Chris Roth.

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Train the Children

THE IMPORTANCE OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION

by Lucas Woodford

Children are precious. They're always learning, always observing, and taking in as much as they can. The book of Proverbs reminds us of this:

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO; EVEN WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.

PROVERBS 22:6

This, we consider essential to our Lutheran school tradition: training children in the way they should go. This is the constant endeavor of our Lutheran schools. I know this firsthand as there was a Lutheran school ministry as part of each congregation I served prior to becoming District President.

The joy of our Lutheran school system is that it's based on what I like to call the four "R"s. Within the walls of our pre-k, elementary, and high school classrooms, students are taught *reading*, *writing*, and *arithmetic*—and the *redemption* we have through our Lord Jesus Christ. (This also results in a fifth "R": the loving *relationship* we have with Him and with one another because of Him).

It is truly a blessing to educate our children in the way that they should go. And what a blessing to have so many wonderful supporters in the communities and congregations of our District! At our Lutheran schools, we speak openly and plainly about the life of faith that comes through Jesus Christ. Not just during religion class, not just during confirmation class, but in all subjects, in the hallway, in the lunchroom, on the playground.

Jesus is not just a subject we teach in our schools. Following Jesus is a way of life. It's a belief that we incorporate into all aspects of our school day because we strive to do more than just teach. Our Lutheran schools seek to shape and form children in the way of the Lord. It's about more than just *information*; it is about faith *formation*.

Another joy of our Lutheran schools is that

they're filled with teachers and staff who not only love the children they serve, but who also know the vital role that parents play. They realize Proverbs 22:6 was written long before any Lutheran schools were created. Therefore, we endeavor to care for, love, and teach the children in our schools amid an intentional partnership with parents. Our goal is never to replace parents, but simply to celebrate, lift up, and partner with them even as we teach their precious children in the way of the Lord.

Another very important verse in Proverbs points to why our Lutheran schools care so deeply about the role of parents. Flip the numbers around from Proverbs 22:6 to Proverbs 6:22:

MY SON, KEEP YOUR FATHER'S COMMANDMENT, AND FORSAKE NOT YOUR MOTHER'S TEACHING. BIND THEM ON YOUR HEART ALWAYS; TIE THEM AROUND YOUR NECK. WHEN YOU WALK, THEY WILL LEAD YOU; WHEN YOU LIE DOWN, THEY WILL WATCH OVER YOU; AND WHEN YOU AWAKE, THEY WILL TALK WITH YOU.

PROVERBS 6:20-22

Many of our Lutheran school teachers and staff are also parents. We know the vital role of parents in the faith life of children. That's why we simply look to celebrate those roles in a partnership that seeks to provide a Christ-centered, academically strong, and respectfully operated education for our children. It is truly a remarkable and wonderful ministry that shines brightly amid our dark and chaotic world. The stories you read in this edition are filled with this light of Christ. Enjoy!



Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford is president of the MN South District. View his latest blog posts and what he's reading at mnsdistrict.org/presidents-office. Email him at lucas.woodford@mnsdistrict.org.



Sharing the Love

SCHOOL YEAR BRINGS NEW STUDENTS—NEW FAITH

Schools have been one of the most impacted groups of the pandemic. Over the summer of 2020, public schools see-sawed between online and in-person learning. Some compromised with hybrid setups that had students in-person a few days a week and online the other days.

The Lutheran schools in the Minnesota South District took a different approach. Determined to provide the best learning experience for each student, principals and school boards committed to in-person learning for the 2020-21 school year, with a commitment to observing pandemic restrictions to keep students and teachers safe. This meant masks and physical distancing indoors, as well as detailed action plans in case there was a COVID-19 outbreak at the school.

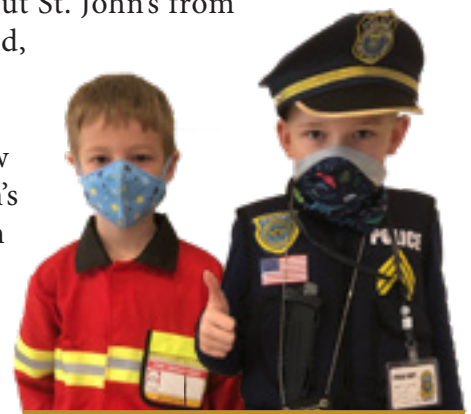
In a year filled with many struggles and disappointments, let us rejoice with our Lutheran schools! Overall, the K-8 schools experienced an average enrollment growth of 14.5 percent.

Principals attribute the growth to the uncertainty of the pandemic. Brett Hardecopf, principal at St. John Lutheran School in Elk River says, “This [uncertainty] led families who had already been considering Christian education to really start to think more about it . . . [because] we made a point to let the community know that we were going to be having class *on campus*.”

The enrollment growth at St. John has come in at around 60 percent more than what they were expecting. One hour south of Elk River sits St. John’s Lutheran School in Chaska. There, Principal Kendra Gilmore reported growth of almost 18 percent—from 129 K-8 students in 2019-20 to 152 in 2020-21. Finally, Principal Joshua Baumann at nearby Zion Lutheran School in Mayer says they added a total of 31 new students and had to turn away about 20 others because they were limiting class sizes to allow for physical distancing.

There are several blessings that these principals point to coming from the enrollment growth.

All three principals are thankful for their school’s reputation in the community. The most effective tool for recruitment last year was word of mouth. “Everyone who came in shared that they learned about St. John’s from a neighbor, friend, colleague, etc.,” says Gilmore, “who shared how amazing St. John’s is and how much they love the family and community feel.”



Students from Zion Lutheran, Mayer, dressed for career day during National Lutheran Schools Week.

Gilmore continues, “Parents are excited about having another school option available to them that focuses on their child as a person and not a number.” Of course, high-quality academics are very important at St. John’s, “but our highest priority is sharing the love of Christ and developing the whole child.”

“Our highest priority is sharing the love of Christ and developing the whole child.”

The new families in 2020-21 did not come from the congregation connected to the school—or even from another church. The enrollment bump provided an incredible witnessing opportunity at a time when children and parents are more stressed, anxious, and isolated than ever before.

Hardecopf believes God brought all the new students and families to St. John “during this difficult time for a purpose.” Every day, the loving staff at St. John “has really worked hard to be there for these families.” The hope and love of Christ was very much needed this year.

At Zion, Baumann says, “Teachers have expressed joy in being able to share the love of Jesus with students that have had very limited exposure before.” This is what Lutheran schools do best: share the Gospel of Christ with every student.

Principals are reporting that most of the new students are re-enrolling for the 2021-22 school year. Hardecopf says that “the pandemic was perhaps the reason the families first considered us, but it is the school environment God has blessed us with that kept them—and that is largely due to our staff!” Lutheran schools would not be beacons of light if not for the loving teachers who dedicate countless hours to make sure all children receive the education, love, and care they deserve.

At Zion, Baumann openly acknowledges that for families coming from the public school system, paying tuition for the first time can be a hard adjustment. A new parent told Baumann, “Zion has made such a difference already in the kids’ education and faith, and we know God will provide a way financially for them to stay.” Adding tuition to



First graders on spirit day at St. John’s Lutheran School, Chaska.

the family budget may not be easy, but parents are adamant that it is worth it.

One thing that parents appreciate is how the teachers selflessly reinforce and live out the Lutheran school identity. Gilmore shared that a parent with three girls in kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade at St. John’s wrote, “From the moment we arrived at St. John’s, God’s love was shown by all who welcomed us home. . . . My girls and I now have a place that is emotionally and socially supportive; it’s given my children roots to ensure the best possible growth both spiritually and cognitively.”

Yes, Lutheran schools faced challenges as they adjusted for enrollment growth while maintaining physical distancing and making sure they had enough teachers, but Baumann knew “all the headaches of adding students would be worth it if one of them decided to re-enroll for a second year.” And it is for this reason: “To be able to continue to share hope and teach Christ to all of these families is why we are Lutheran teachers and administrators. It is why Lutheran schools are here.”

“To share hope and teach Christ to all of these families is why we are Lutheran teachers and administrators.”

Despite the difficulties of the 2020-21 school year, our Lutheran K-8 schools are doing well! Blessed with increased enrollment, principals, teachers, and school boards have boosted confidence in who they are and what they do.

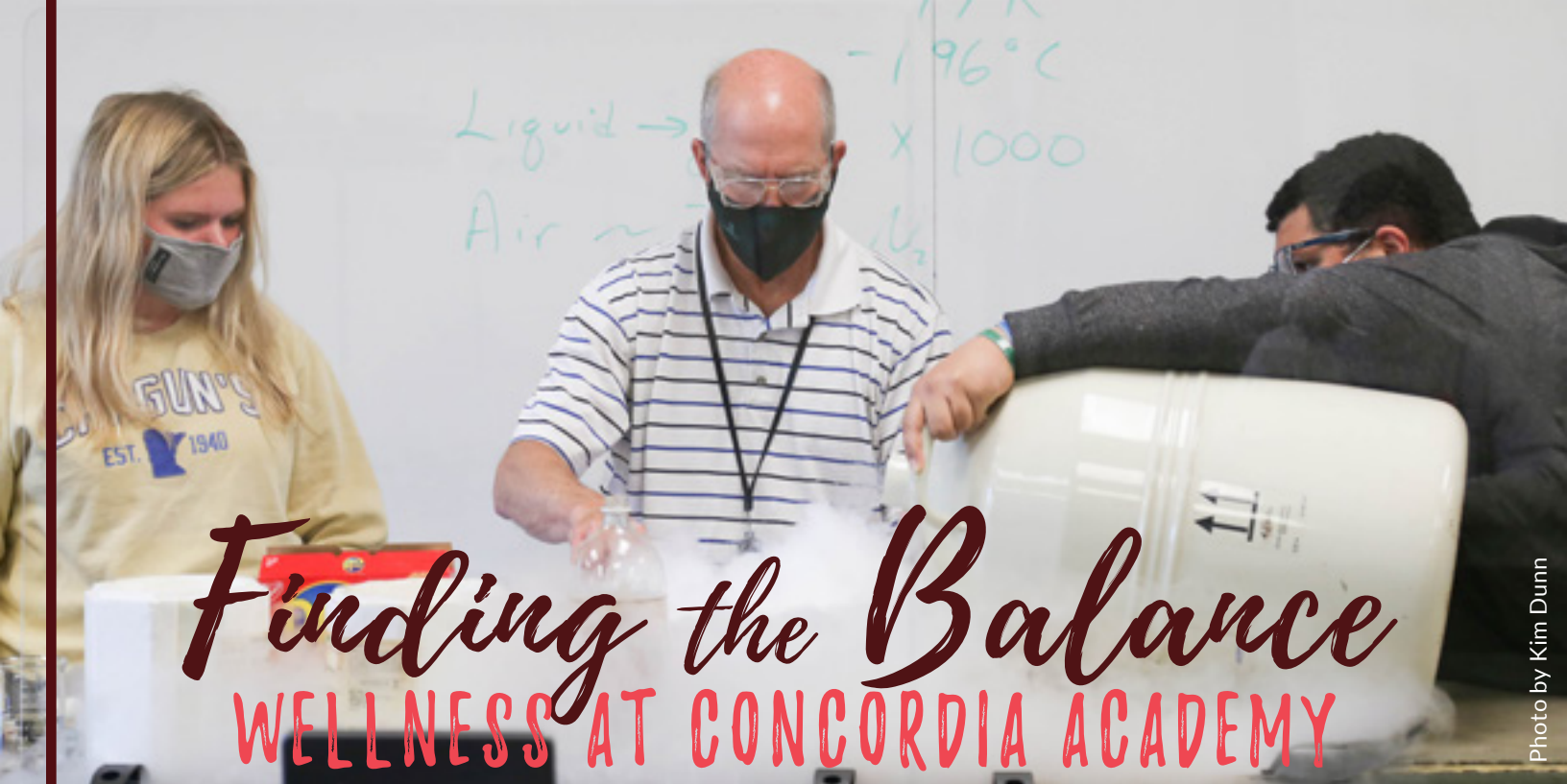


Photo by Kim Dunn

by Timothy Berner

Concordia Academy began the 2020-21 school year with the premise that the safest and healthiest place for students to be was in school and in-person. To this end, we created a COVID-19 operations plan called “CA Strong.” This plan addressed everything from when / if parents should send their kids to school, to specific new policies and practices regarding distancing, masking, classrooms, lunchroom, chapels, etc. At a fundamental level, most recommended protections against COVID-19 are antithetical to the very mission of CA. Our goal was to strike a balance between protecting students and faculty from COVID-19 while at the same time maintaining a meaningful, life-giving community.

This resulted in our not following every recommendation of the CDC, MDH, and MDE. Hindsight has proven this to be the correct course of action. More than a few times, CA changed a policy or procedure based on our internal evidence and priorities, only to have the CDC or MDE follow course weeks later.

The greatest way in which we supported the wellness of our students and faculty was remaining in school and in-person all year long. Christian community is the wellspring of life! Our students

and families gratefully drank from this well all year long.

Those who faced the greatest challenge this year were our teachers. Their workload increased exponentially. I’m incredibly proud to say that they more than rose to the occasion, but it came at a cost. They poured themselves out emotionally, physically, and intellectually. The end of the year cannot come too soon for these exhausted servants.

Christian community is the wellspring of life!

A great joy experienced this year is the tremendous gratitude of both our students and parents that we did meet in school and in-person all year long. They realize this is a blessing few have experienced this year. They are also grateful that we adjusted our policies and procedures based on our internal evidence and priorities, even when other similar institutions chose different paths.



Rev. Timothy Berner is the principal at Concordia Academy, Roseville. Email him at tim.berner@concordiaacademy.com.

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National Lutheran School Accreditation

HIGH EXPECTATIONS SPARK CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

by Emily Anderson



According to its mission statement, “NLSA encourages and recognizes schools that provide quality, Christian education and engage in continuous improvement.” NLSA standards set a parameter to which a school is held accountable. To be accredited, schools must meet the criteria of national standards. Successfully completing accreditation gives teachers and administrators a new set of confidence that what they are doing on a daily basis meets these quality standards.

The great thing about following national standards is that there are benefits for everyone involved. The school as a whole benefits from the intense reflection that takes place throughout the self-study process. It encourages a collaborative approach during the review of every aspect of the school, including curriculum, personnel, finances, student services, and more. Ultimately, the students benefit the most because they are the heart of the mission of our Lutheran schools.

While the site visit is in one way a culmination of a year’s worth of hard work and reflection, it isn’t the end goal. Rather, it is the beginning, or continuation, of efforts to serve students in the best ways possible. For example, schools that complete the accreditation process have put a lot of work into writing curriculum. This is often just the springboard for further action. Future steps include mapping the curriculum and continually reviewing it to ensure state standards are met, faith integration is intentionally incorporated, and students are equipped for the next academic step. Accredited schools must report annually on the

progress being made toward improvement.

Added pressures of the pandemic have caused school administrators and teachers to focus on how to best educate students in a variety of settings: in-person, virtual, and hybrid. Teachers definitely have gone the extra mile to accommodate learners in all scenarios. It’s been a physically and emotionally challenging year for teachers. Fortunately, schools were able to take advantage of the NLSA Pandemic Extension. In our MN South District, 10 schools were granted the Pandemic Extension and have postponed site visits.

NLSA brings rewards for those beyond the school itself. The culmination of the year-long review of the self-study is a site visit by the validation team. On a recent visit, I reflected on the great privilege it has been for me to visit so many different schools. Each time, I find new ideas that inspire me to continue in my work. I’m also continually humbled by the dedication of our Lutheran educators going above and beyond each and every day. I leave my visits encouraged and reminded that I am part of something so much greater. I’m part of a team that loves Jesus and seeks to serve Him each day.

The students benefit the most because they are the heart of the mission of our Lutheran schools.

NLSA relies on the dedication and service of professional educators. In the coming year, many volunteers will be needed to serve on validation teams and in other roles. Please email me if you would like to get involved in this process.

Thanks to Cletus Pfeiffer, retired commissioner, for his input and insights in putting this article together.



Emily Anderson is the MN South District NLSA Commissioner. Email her at mrs.emilyanderson@gmail.com.

Schools to watch

MICRO-SCHOOL MODEL & NEW HIGH SCHOOL TO LAUNCH THIS FALL

We're excited to share two new school starts in the MN South District: Good Shepherd Lutheran High School, Elk River, and Laurel Community School, Twin Cities East Metro. These new school starts have abundant promise for the coming years.

Good Shepherd Lutheran High School

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

John 10:14

Good Shepherd Lutheran High School will serve grades 9–12, starting this September. Their mission is “Growing in Grace, Serving in Community, and Leading in Faith.” Their vision is to build a Christ-centered community of learners. With a foundation built in the LCMS, their doors are open to all to give families in the community another option for high school.

Director of School Ministry Melissa Lamkin is passionate about working with families and the education process. She says, “Supporting families and building character through Christ is our focus and priority.”

Students at GSL High School will receive high-quality education in a nurturing and innovative environment that enables them to develop their full potential through a strong, caring, and supportive community where all are valued and respected. Lamkin says, “We want to be able to reach each student as an individual with an understanding that each person learns in a different way. Our goal is to walk alongside the student to encourage him or her wherever God is leading.”

Lamkin says another primary goal of GSL High School is to collaborate with local LCMS elementary schools (St. John, Crown, and Trinity) to build a supportive community. “We have seen strength and support in numbers and look forward to seeing where the teamwork will lead.”

Find out more about GSL High School at gslhighschool.org.

Laurel Community School

Education means emancipation. It means light and liberty.

Frederick Douglass

Laurel Community School is slated to open this fall. The mission of this elementary school is to “Equip the next generation to serve humanity and to glorify God.” One unique aspect of LCS is their micro-school model, which is kind of like a modern-day one-room schoolhouse. The model encourages students to own their education experience, with their teacher acting as a guide.

LCS founder Alfrieda Baldwin believes the micro-school model will open the door for many such small schools around the Twin Cities. But not to compete with existing Christian schools. She hopes there will soon be enough Christian schools that “every Christian family has an opportunity to get their child a quality Christian education.”

A recent report from the American Enterprise Institute, written by Lyman Stone, found a correlation between increased spending on secular education and the increasing secularity of our society. So, summarizes Baldwin, “our tax dollars are actually being used to evangelize our children away from Christianity.”

Just as there is freedom to be found in the Gospel of Christ, there is freedom found in education. “When you can read God’s Word and you have the ability to understand God’s Word, then it can act as a guide for your life, and then you can figure out what your purpose is,” says Baldwin. LCS education will be focused on building morals, character, and knowledge so that each student discovers his or her purpose in life.

Find out more about LCS at laurelcs.org.

A PASTOR for the sheep

by Jon Kuehne

Photo by Anna Gruen

For almost five years, I interacted with Trinity First Lutheran School in Minneapolis on the sidelines. My wife serves as the K4 teacher and school counselor. And now God has called me to serve here, too, as Campus Pastor.

In my view, there is no ministry quite like Trinity First. The school sits in a unique urban setting—right next to the Phillips neighborhood, which is one of the most diverse places in the U.S. Diversity is reflected in the students and families connected to the school: African, Hispanic, and Caucasian. Citizens, immigrants, and refugees. Well off, getting by, and needing assistance. Believers and non-believers. Two-parent, single-parent, and raised-by-relatives households. All this diversity makes the community here beautiful.

I'm here because I believe God is doing an incredible work at and through Trinity First for the people He loves in Minneapolis! Think about it: families who may never think of walking into a Christian church are coming to Trinity First. Here, they hear the Gospel. They experience love and care. They step into life in a Christian community. This is exactly why I love being here. I get to serve at the intersection of it all, as pastor, teacher, evangelist, missionary, counselor, mentor, friend, and much more. I am so blessed to be here.

Over the last few months, God has been at work. It takes time to get your foot in the door and build relationships, but God is helping.

- Parents are reaching out for prayer and support, and I get to know them better during parent education classes.
- We baptized two third graders, and all third

graders received personal Bibles and a special week-long class with me to learn about their Bibles and how to read God's Word.

- In Boy's Club, third through eighth grade boys and I talk about what it means to be Godly men, plus home life and growing up.
- I've talked with local residents, business leaders, and religious officials about how we can improve our neighborhood.

Now that Trinity First has a campus pastor, there is someone waking up every morning, thinking about the spiritual lives of the students and families connected to the school. We hope to see an increase of believers in the community, leading to a new growth and rebirth of the worshiping community at Trinity First. But above all, we hope that God is glorified through Trinity First.

Trinity First greatly appreciates your prayers. If you would like to join with a group of other Christians praying for Trinity First, email standingthegap@trinityfirst.org. Additionally, 75 percent of those we serve are below the poverty line, so only 5 percent of our income comes from tuition and fees. The final 95 percent comes from generous donations from people like you. Visit trinityfirst-school.org to learn more. Finally, there are many ways to serve with your time and abilities. To discover how you might bless Trinity First through your service, send me an email.



Pastor Jon Kuehne serves as campus pastor at Trinity First Lutheran School in Minneapolis. Email him at jkuehne@trinityfirst.org.

Honored to serve & teach

DAVID GESCH RECOGNIZED AS DISTINGUISHED MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER

David Gesch was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2021 Distinguished Lutheran Middle School Teacher Award. He teaches various subjects in grades 4–8 and serves as athletic director and coach at Redeemer Christian Academy in Wayzata. David has also served in Wisconsin. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from Concordia University, Nebraska.

When asked about his greatest joys in ministry, David said, "One of my great joys is when I see my kids very matter-of-factly talking about Jesus with that unwavering, undoubting, child-like faith." He continued, "As far as pure joy goes, nothing beats an unchurched, no-faith background child coming into my room and seeing them leave with an active faith!"

Parental support for David's nomination included this accolade: "David has taught each one of our children. David has served in a variety of leadership positions at Redeemer, such as that of interim school principal, as an elder . . . a referee at countless basketball games, as basketball coach . . . as athletic director for the school. . . . In addition to David's extensive involvement in sports, he is also responsible for creating and coordinating the celebration of Veterans Day . . . to lift up, pray for, and thank those who have and currently serve our nation in uniform."

David's pastor also supports his nomination. "David and



David Gesch with new students Laara and Cole, who recognize the privilege and responsibility of helping with flag duty.

I have worked together in ministry, pastor and teacher, for 6 ½ years at Redeemer Christian Academy. Two of our four daughters who attend RCA have had the blessing of being mentored by this man of God. At home, they talk about his funny quips, his love of the Green Bay Packers, but most of all, his love of Jesus and his effective teaching style—personable, high standards, engaged with the students."

Dave's nominator captured his qualifications for this award. "His love of Christ shows through everything he does. The middle schoolers respect his consistent and calm demeanor. Mr. Gesch goes above and beyond for his students in everyday teaching and in the events he leads outside of the school day. One of his most important legacies is the Veterans Day celebration. . . . He brings in veterans from our community and honors them through letters and poems, and the children write songs and speeches."

David's personal mission statement is "Building servant leaders who love their Savior and love their country!"



LEA Distinguished Lutheran Middle School Teacher Award presented to David Gesch (left) by Dr. Jonathan Laabs (right), Executive Director of Lutheran Education Association.

Grounded, formed, committed

THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST AT ROCHESTER CENTRAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

by Suzanne Lagerwaard

Over the course of my career, God has guided my path and provided me with abundant opportunities. The first two decades of my teaching career included work in both public and parochial settings. In 1999, due to an expat assignment of my husband, my family moved to the Netherlands. That year, I worked as the Head of the Primary School at the International School Eerde. This administrative role at Eerde birthed my desire to grow in educational leadership. Upon returning to the United States, I spent 20 years in various positions in curriculum development, teacher supervision, college-level teacher instruction, and school leadership as a principal. I also obtained my K-12 principal licensure.

In the summer of 2013, I was recruited to serve at RCLS as interim principal. Since I was not Lutheran at the time, the idea of serving long-term was not something I considered. However, within the first few months of being on campus, my heart was captured by the spirit of Christ in this school community. This began my journey of becoming a part of the Lutheran church. Pastor Nathaniel Schwartz and Pastor Joel Haak mentored my husband and me, and subsequently we joined the LCMS church. I then went through colloquy and was ultimately called to be RCLS's principal.

As I approach the end of my 38th year in education, I look back with particular fondness over the past eight years here at RCLS. I have been blessed to lead a team of educators and staff that has accomplished so much to strengthen and extend the school's mission to educating children who are "Grounded in Grace, Formed in Faith, and Committed to Learning for Life."

Now, as we look toward the 2021-22 school year, we have a vibrant campus that has been significantly updated, classrooms that are full of

engaged students, a curriculum and committed teachers that are second-to-none in Rochester, and a positive, joyful school culture that endures, even through a pandemic. Furthermore, we continue to enjoy robust enrollment and the partnership of some of Rochester's best families.

It is, then, time to determine what is next for RCLS. As our school grows and our students thrive, we find we need additional administrative and education staff and potentially need additional space in the coming years. We also wonder what else we ought to be imagining.

It is in this context that I have determined it an appropriate time to step back from my duties as the principal at RCLS. After I step down, I intend to serve as the assistant principal, a new position for our growing school. In this role, I will support RCLS's new principal, Dr. Todd Baringer, as he leads our school community into the next chapter of our journey. It has been an extraordinary honor and privilege, more than words can express, to have served as RCLS's principal. Now, I look forward to a new role—and to all that God has in store for this amazing school.

RCLS has been a great blessing to me. When I think of words to describe my experience, the word "community" comes to mind. This is an encouraging community of Christ, and I am better for it. My hope is that RCLS continues to be a place where Christians of many denominations feel at home. I also pray unchurched families that land at RCLS will be drawn by the grace and love they experience in our school community. In this way, our journey will persist in the work of Christ.



Suzanne Lagerwaard serves at Rochester Central Lutheran School. Email her at sulagerwaard@rcls.net.

“THE FATHERS HAVE EATEN SOUR GRAPES, AND THE CHILDREN’S TEETH ARE SET ON EDGE.”

EZEKIEL 18:2

Jews in the Old Testament would have used the proverb above to defend themselves before God. It is the same thing as saying, “God is punishing me because of the sins of my father.” The disciples had the same attitude when they asked Jesus about a man who was blind from birth:

... “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

John 9:2-3

Fortunately, it is not the sins of our parents that condemn us. As Ezekiel says:

The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

Ezekiel 18:20

Unfortunately, our own sin does condemn us. Yet God has displayed His glory in us by paying the consequences of our sin through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. What if we apply this reasoning to who should be enrolled in Lutheran schools?

In his dissertation “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod School System: A Historical Perspective and Comparative Study,” Dr. Jan W. Lohmeyer includes a story about heated debate at the 1850 LCMS Convention. There were pastors who did not want to open enrollment in our Lutheran schools to non-Lutherans.

It was only thanks to a speech given by our first Lutheran school director, C.F.W. Walther, based on Ezekiel 18, that the vote swung unanimously in favor of open enrollment. Walther said a child couldn’t be held accountable for the sins of his parents. He added that the Gospels tell us, “Feed my lambs” (John 21:15), and “whoever receives one such child in my name receives me” (Matthew 18:5). But it all started with Ezekiel.

According to the LCMS School Ministry Office, only 35 percent of Lutheran school students are LCMS members. And astonishingly, 24 percent

of students come from unchurched families.

Lutheran pastors and teachers believe that “God desires all people to be saved” and that “God so loved the WORLD . . . that WHOEVER believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (1 Timothy 2:4 and John 3:16, emphasis added). Therefore, Lutheran schools have open enrollment because we want to share the Gospel message with anyone God brings to our doors.

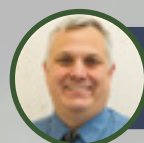
So this is what I want us to think about:

1. *Most Lutheran schools will enroll students whose parents are from other Christian denominations. Should our schools admit children whose parents are Hindu, Muslim, etc.? What about same-sex parents? If so, how do we set proper expectations at enrollment?*
2. *What difficulties arise when schools enroll students from non-Christian families?*
3. *How can pastors and lay people support Lutheran schools that have unchurched families?*

Prayer:

Jesus, Savior and Good Shepherd, who has given Your life to save us, You have directed us to “feed your lambs.” By Your Spirit, draw to our Lutheran schools and centers students who are open to the work of Your Word in their hearts. Immerse them in Your truth and in true wisdom. Bless our students, schools, teachers, and staffs. Strengthen, equip, and encourage all who teach and learn, so that Your name is praised and honored as knowledge, skills, and attitudes are imparted and acquired. Open our eyes to those who do not yet know Your truth and love, and help us to find ways to serve their needs.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.



Sean Martens serves as the Assistant to the President, Education at the Minnesota South District office. Email him at sean.martens@mnsdistrict.org.

YOUR MISSION GIFTS AT WORK

We invite you to use this list in your personal and corporate prayers, that these leaders would be strengthened in their efforts to reach people with the good news of Jesus.

2021 District-supported missions & missionaries

MN South / CALMS Exploratory Trips to Central America

Rev. Dr. William Utech

District Correctional Ministry

DCE Dr. James Seemann

Holy Cross & Our Savior Lutheran Churches (Austin & Brownsdale) & East Austin Immigrant Outreach

Pastor Gemechu Olana

LINC Twin Cities

Pastor Ben Griffin & Pastor Demelash Yoseph

New Creation Lutheran Church (Shakopee)

Vicar Jorge Gomez

New Church Incubator: Multi-Ethnic Church Plant (Minneapolis)

Pastor Paul Biebighauser & Vicar Matthew Cephus

- POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach)
- Nader & Georgette Alaraj, Twin Cities
- John & Mariam Gayed, Rochester
- ReDO / Shepherd of the Valley (Hastings)
- Pastor Chad Kirchoff
- St. Matthew's & Gloria Dei Lutheran Churches (Columbia Heights & Minneapolis) & NE Minneapolis Outreach
- Pastor Martin Cornes
- Sudanese Evangelical Lutheran Mission of Southern Minnesota (Faribault)
- Pastor Gatluk Reat
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

MN South District LCMS career and GEO missionaries



Rev. Dr. Thomas & Mary Aadland
Theological educator,
Kenya



Rev. Vance & Linda Becker
Theological educators,
Kenya



Johanna Heidorn
Photographer /
communication
outreach specialist,
Latin America &
Caribbean



Rev. Dr. Daniel & Dr. Joan Jastram
Asia theological
education manager,
Asia



Missionaries in their own Words

STORIES FROM YOUR DISTRICT-SUPPORTED MISSIONARIES

On May 1, volunteers from Christ Victorious Lutheran Church, Chaska, and Royal Family Fellowship, New Hope, met for a service project. Spurred together by LINC Twin Cities, the volunteers packed 301 hygiene kits for at-risk women in Liberia. These kits will support the ministry of Chance International Outreach, led by Evelyn Seton-Boltman.

Vicar Matthew Cephus, church planter from Christ Victorious and leader of Royal Family Fellowship, along with Associate Pastor Aaron Kuehn and member Cindy Harman from Christ Victorious, organized the effort. They want to help their congregations get to know one another as they jointly plant a multi-ethnic church in Minneapolis. God continues to work in and through His people to share and grow the Gospel.

This New Church Incubator: Multi-Ethnic Church Plant is one of the new ministry efforts facilitated and funded by the Minnesota South District in 2021.





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**TRAIN UP A CHILD
IN THE WAY
HE SHOULD GO;
EVEN WHEN
HE IS OLD
HE WILL NOT
DEPART FROM IT.**

PROVERBS 22:6