

A great reception . . .

by Paula Rosen

The New York program of Lutheran Special Education Ministries is a success—judging by the reception I've received from administrators, principals and guidance counselors. Each school I visited gave the ministry a warm, enthusiastic welcome.

When I entered Martin Lutheran High School in Maspeth, N. Y., I saw a sign on the message board: "Welcome Paula Rosen, Director, Lutheran Special Education Ministries."

"God's love through God's people for His special children is a powerful force and can only lead to great things."

This indicates the reception I've received from everyone I've met in Lutheran schools in New York. These dedicated Lutheran educators know there is a great need for this ministry in this area.

The program's initial stages focused on educating teachers and administrators about learning disabilities and introducing them to the services we offer. Several teachers, principals and parents have contacted the New York office about testing their children. We hope to see many children here in New York receive the help that was previously unavailable to them.

I spoke with one parent who had removed her child from a Lutheran school because he was struggling. She is excited by the arrival of Lutheran Special Education Ministries in New York. For this mother, it means that enrolling her child in a Lutheran school may now be possible. We are working

together to discover how we can find this child's special learning needs.

One principal told me that several of her students were tested in the New York City public schools—but the results came back that the students do not have learning disabilities. This principal is frustrated, because she knows they *do* have special learning needs.

The New York City schools are overwhelmed with cases, so they are very selective in placing children. Financial difficulties have hit New York schools very hard this year, so there is less funding available for special education.

It seems as if God sent us to New York just when we were needed the most. This principal is delighted that Lutheran Special Education Ministries can identify and "enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education."

I've also received a warm welcome from New York teachers. I spent one September afternoon at a school faculty

meeting. The reception I received was wonderful. The teachers had many questions and asked me to come back and educate them further. They particularly wanted to know how they could be alert to a child who may have special needs and what strategies they should take to help that child.

I am struck by the dedication of these special Lutheran teachers. They do not see these children as burdens, but as opportunities to grow and expand as teachers and as instruments of God. This is truly seeing what God can do through His people.

The future for the New York program of Lutheran Special Education Ministries is very bright. God's love through God's people for His special children is a powerful force and can only lead to great things. I thank Him every day that I am a part of this very special ministry.

In a past issue of the "Advocate," you read about an agreement signed between Lutheran Special Education Ministries and the Lutheran Schools Association of New York that brought services to the children of New York for

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From left: Paula Rosen, Dr. Mel Kieschnick, Roger DeMeyere and Pastor Martin Nate at Rosen's Sept. 29 installation as Director of Lutheran Special Education Ministries of New York.

A partnership in special education

by Rev. Michael Lutz

I am very privileged to serve a congregation where there is a Christian day school. I feel that Christian education is an extremely important part of the church's ministry—it's one way to reach out to our community with Christ's love.

Our Christian day school has truly been a blessing in bringing many new families into the Christian faith.

As our congregation and school continued to expand, there was a need to add another important area to the school's curriculum. We discovered that there were several students who had special education needs that we were unable to meet with our current staff. Because of that, we contracted with Lutheran Special Education Ministries in Detroit for a part-time resource person.

During the years this resource person has been on our school staff, we discovered that our school's ministry has been able to expand. We found that there is a growing need to help certain students with special education.

Staff members from Lutheran Special Education Ministries are extremely competent and are a blessing to our total school's ministry. We discovered that through their involvement on our staff, we have been able to expand our vision of how students can be helped and through it, our ministry enhanced.

As I reflect upon our school's ministry, I realize the importance of offering to our church families—as well as to our community—the best in Christian education. I feel our staff and our curriculum is doing that. I know that the Lord is truly blessing this aspect of our ministry.

Over the years, the different staff members from Lutheran Special Education Ministries have been involved in our congregational life. Each has felt a part of our congregational family, even though they may not have been a member. They are always very concerned about what is happening at Immanuel. They have demonstrated not only to the student, but also to the entire congregation, how they are very sup-



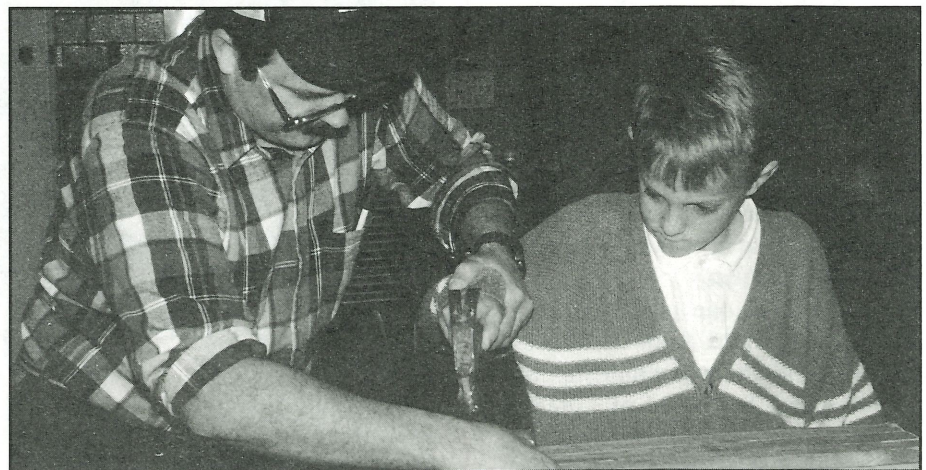
From left: Robert Christian, Principal of Immanuel Lutheran School, Mount Clemens, Michigan; Loren Popke, Resource Room Teacher at Immanuel; Pastor Michael Lutz.

portive of total Christian education within the church and the school.

We consider it an honor and a privilege to be a partner in this ministry. As we continue to grow, we know we will need to move from having a part-time resource room to a full-time resource room.

When this ministry began, I was apprehensive because of the small number of students who would be helped. As we have been involved in this program over the years, my attitude has changed. I see the value and the need for increasing our quality and ministry within our Christian day school.

Over the years, the personnel from Lutheran Special Education Ministries demonstrated God's love in a very special way to our special students and also to each of us as members. We know that as the years progress, the



At the Harvest Festival Oct. 12 at the North Detroit Lutheran School, Mr. Theiss helps a young carpenter build a wooden toolbox. The Festival was very successful. All proceeds were matched by Lutheran Brotherhood Branch 8043.

Lord will continue to bless that ministry and all that we do.

Our primary goal at Immanuel is to reach out with God's love and, through that love, make disciples. Our Christian day school, through its partnership with Lutheran Special Education Ministries, is helping in that process.

As we continue to trust in the Lord, rely upon His leading and direction and always strive to be the best that we possible can be for Him, I know that our school, in partnership with Lutheran Special Education Ministries, will be a blessing not only to our students now, but also for many generations to come. We are very pleased with Lutheran Special Education Ministries and how they have and are continuing to help us in our ministry here at Immanuel.

Moving forward in Michigan

by Gloria Burley

The coming of fall is always welcomed by educators, because with the change in season comes the beginning of school. We look forward to being with our students, both those who are returning and those new to the programs.

This year our self-contained special education school, North Detroit Lutheran, has 48 students in six classrooms. Due to the large graduating class last June and to the mainstreaming of some students, we have been able to reduce the school by two classrooms.

We have also made some curricular changes at North Detroit Lutheran. Teachers are implementing the Whole Language approach in the classrooms. Students are quite enthusiastic about



Melissa Schmitt working on an art project at North Detroit Lutheran School.

the activities involved. They have been taking field trips, singing, reading, writing, drawing, discussing and cooking.

We have also departmentalized physical education, music, art, drama and math enrichment. Teachers use their areas of strength and interest to guide the children in developing their strengths. Responses to those activities have been positive as shown by the artwork on the walls and the happy sounds from the music, drama and P.E. rooms.

Nineteen Lutheran schools are receiving resource room services. Two elementary schools joined the ministry this year: Evergreen Lutheran in Detroit and Our Shepherd Lutheran in Birmingham.

In the five high schools, 96 students receive services, either in direct academic instruction or in tutorial study halls where the students receive supportive help for the academic classes, learn study skills or are taught compensatory strategies.

One hundred and three students receive resource room services in 14 Lutheran grade schools. As in the high schools, instruction in the grade schools may include direct content instruction such as reading, spelling or arithmetic; instruction in study skills; or support for the content areas.

The services offered depend on each student's individual needs. The educational plan for any student, whether in the self-contained school, the high schools, or the regular elementary education schools is highly individualized.

The goal of our ministry is to enable these children to remain in a Lutheran school and receive the Christian educa-

tion such placement offers. As an individual becomes enabled, direct services may decrease in frequency and intensity with perhaps only intermittent consultant services being necessary as the individual returns to the mainstream of education.

We thank God for the exciting opportunity to serve Him by serving His children. We thank you for your loving support of this special ministry.

What's new in Illinois?

by Jim Krone

Lutheran Special Education Ministries—Illinois Programs is off to a great start this year. These programs include our Ephphatha Testing Consultant facility and Special Education Materials Library. Both are located in the new Communication Education Center at Concordia University, River Forest, Ill.

The move to this new facility will enable our ministry to:

1. Use individual evaluation units when assessing children's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Give parents a comfortable area to wait during individual evaluations.
3. Give visibility for students of the university to see and understand the ministry

to special needs children.

4. Meet with Lutheran school teachers in Illinois who are interested in helping children with special needs in their schools.

5. Enable teachers throughout Illinois Lutheran schools to access information and materials from our Special Education Materials Library.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries thanks Concordia University for making this space available so we can better serve those students in Lutheran schools with special needs.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries—Illinois Programs continues to operate half-day resource rooms in Lutheran schools throughout the Northern Illinois District. These six resource rooms—in St. Paul, Melrose Park; Immanuel, Elmhurst; Pilgrim, Chicago; Ashburn, Chicago; Walther Lutheran High School, Melrose Park; and Luther High School South, Chicago—share the cost of enabling a special education teacher to work individually with students who have special needs.

These teachers also consult with teachers, parents and principals to help make sure that all students in that school—whether they are identified as having a special need or just are having difficulty with some aspect of the school experience—will be assured a successful Christ-centered school year.

Opening doors

by Kathy Krause

Lutheran Special Education Ministries' Ephphatha Center continues to open doors of opportunity across the country. Since the printing of the last "Advocate," calls and letters have come to us from all parts of the United States.

Congregations are asking how they can meet the needs of children and adults who experience learning difficulties, but who are still reaching out to know their Savior.

"Congregations are making an effort to help those with diversified handicaps," says Shirley Danz, Ephphatha Center's curriculum consultant.

With the addition of the New York partnership, student evaluation services are available in three states: Michigan, Illinois and New York. Through these intellectual and educational evaluations, teachers and parents are better able to know the strengths of individual children, enabling them to better cope with their areas of weakness.

New and exciting avenues are now open to schools in both Michigan and Illinois with the new concept of an "On-site Consultant." This special education consultant is assigned to a school for a half day per week. This consultant works with the teaching staff and the parents to effectively touch the lives of all the children in the school building, not just those who have learning problems.

In **Michigan**, Gail Vahlbusch serves St. Matthew, Westland; East Bethlehem, Detroit; Mount Hope, Allen Park; and Calvary, Lincoln Park.

In **Illinois**, Inez Peterson services Immanuel, Palatine; Terry Sohn serves Trinity, Lansing; Dawn Thomas serves St. Paul, Woodworth; Audrey James serves Prince of Peace, Chicago, and St. James, Chicago.

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the 1991-92 school year.

Dr. Mel Kieschnick, executive director of the Lutheran Schools Association, is enthusiastic about the service. "It is a marvelous resource for children and their families, especially those whose needs we are currently unable to adequately meet. It offers hope to some families who currently see very little hope in the educational future of their children. The service will assist teachers who are sometimes very frustrated in their efforts to empower special children to become all that God intends them to be."

The venture is enhanced by other Lutheran organizations in the New York area: Concordia College, Bronxville; the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Metro-New York Synod; Mill Neck Manor Lutheran School for the Deaf; and Lutheran Community Services.

Reminder:

Campbell Labels for Education Program: Labels from all products must be received by March 1, 1992, to help us meet our goal of one million labels to get a new van. Please send your labels to:

**Lutheran Special
Education Ministries
6861 E. Nevada
Detroit, MI 48234**



Students from North Detroit Lutheran School reenacting the birth of Christ.

Partnership in ministry

Your partnership in our ministry to help children who have special learning needs or are deaf to know about Christ is important.

The cost of providing special educational services to children and their families is great.

Your partnership in our ministry helps us continue our 119-year mission

of sharing Christ with children with special needs. Please remember our ministry in your prayers.

Send your gift to:

**Lutheran Special Education
Ministries
6861 E. Nevada
Detroit, MI 48234**

Statement of Ministry

With the knowledge of God's love and desire that God's love be revealed through our ministry, Lutheran Special Education Ministries serves to enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education.

The Advocate

for Students with Special Learning Needs

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