

With your help

Today, things are looking up for Steven

by Karen Eggemeyer

Things weren't going well for Steven. His problems started in kindergarten as he struggled to complete the work and keep up with the other children. He just couldn't do it. After repeating kindergarten and struggling through first grade, he went into second grade. He ended up repeating second grade too.

Since Steven's mother worked during the day, and his father worked at night, his father took care of him after school. But Steven and his father did not have a good relationship. His father was not very attentive or loving. He did not allow Steven to interact with other children, so the boy had no friends.

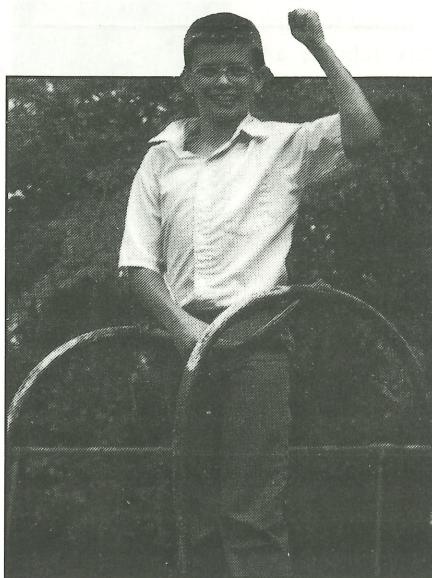
When Steven was 7, his father died. His mother became permanently disabled from epilepsy, arthritis and strokes.

Steven also has physical problems: a hearing loss in one ear, epilepsy, and muscles in his legs and feet that will require corrective surgery or braces.

You can imagine what all that did to his self-esteem—to his life. Steven became confused and emotionally upset. He wouldn't talk to anyone. As he struggled with his homework, he became even more upset because he didn't know what to do—or how to do it. His frustration caused his mother to become frustrated too. She didn't know how to help him.

Looking for answers

Steven's mother began looking for answers, for help. She called the principal at St. Peter Lutheran School in



Steven is on top of his world!

Eastpointe, Mich., and was referred to Lutheran Special Education Ministries for testing. Test results showed that Steven was intelligent, but he had great difficulty learning because of a condition known as ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and all the other emotional side effects of the challenges in his life. ADHD involves various degrees of inattention, distractibility and physical restlessness.

"The testing gave me a tool that I could use to help Steven work through his problems and be successful," his mother said. "I didn't want him to remain in public school and be pushed through the system by people who were not going to provide the help he needed. I want Steven to have a chance to be whatever he wants to be, but he needs help to do that."

In January 1992, Steven was placed

at North Detroit Lutheran School, the Lutheran Special Education Ministries special education day school, in a class with seven other children.

Before, Steven "knew he was not performing like the other children," his mom said. "But once he started at North Detroit Lutheran, his teacher worked all day with him. He got most of his homework done before he left school, and it was correct. Also, he then didn't have to spend all evening trying to do homework he did not understand. He wasn't frustrated anymore, and it helped me at home in the evenings also. Our relationship at home got better also since he has been going to school here."

Things are looking up

Steven is 11 now. After three school years at North Detroit Lutheran, Steven has come a long way. "Steven is more outgoing, has more confidence in himself. His writing has drastically improved, and he does mathematics with more understanding and success," his mother commented. This summer, she said, he was counting the days before he would be able to return to school.

"Now, he talks to others, communicates and responds better. He also feels better about himself. He is doing better in school and has friends his own age," his mother said.

Steven's mom praised the teachers at North Detroit Lutheran. They "treat the children as if the children were their own. The teachers even feel that way about the students in the other teachers' classes. It is like a big family. Even the parents try to pitch in and help out. In a family, everyone cares about each other and helps one another."

Steven's mom coordinates the Campbell Labels for Education Program for Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

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Steven enjoys himself on the playground at North Detroit Lutheran School.

She organizes the cutting and bundling of the thousands of labels that come into the school from all over the country. After the labels are prepared and sent to the Campbell Soup Company, the school receives computers, gym equipment and other items for the children that the school would otherwise be unable to afford. "I feel that doing this work helps God to help His special children," she said.

Steven is also learning quite a lot about Christ. According to his mom, he has even been witnessing about his faith to a neighbor boy. At school, Steven is learning "that God is here in time of need, and that we can and should go to God in prayer anytime."

Financial help is found

Sending Steven to North Detroit Lutheran School is not inexpensive. It costs \$9,000 a year, but parents are asked to pay a reduced tuition of \$2,000. "At first I was upset by even that amount," his mom said, "because I did not have enough funds to pay for Steven's tuition. But I realized that God always takes care of His own, and that somehow Steven would attend this school."

And he did, thanks to a special scholarship fund. Congregations and individuals like you have donated additional funds each year to help students who cannot afford the tuition. Steven is only able to attend school at North Detroit Lutheran because of you.

We can help more children

Through your gifts, the success that Steven is experiencing can continue. Please keep Steven, and all the other Stevens in our ministry, in your prayers.

Please remember us with your financial support. You can personally sponsor Steven or any other child at North Detroit Lutheran School for one month by donating \$900; for one week with a gift of \$225; for one day with a gift of \$45; for one hour with a gift of \$8.

Your help, no matter how large or small, does make a difference. Through you, we can help children here in Detroit as well as other children throughout our programs in the rest of Michigan, Illinois, New York and around the United States.

Hope for the future

Thanks to North Detroit Lutheran, Steven and his mom now look forward to the future. Steven's mom hopes and prays that her son will continue to attend this school, and learn from his education here how to deal with life's situations and the problems he will face in his life.

"I anticipate that North Detroit Lutheran School will help prepare Steven for college, one of his dreams. He wants to be a law enforcement officer and wants to obtain a college degree. Also, I want Steven to grow in his faith and become a strong Christian and a loving person."

She added, "Your donation to this school would be for a very good cause. Working with the future of our children through the Lord is very worthwhile. Your donation would help more children get this special help that they need, while also learning about God's love for them."



Steven and his mother, Jean.

Notes

- Fred Masch, 94, of Warren, Mich., a loyal volunteer for many years and 1991 Volunteer of the Year, was given the Crown of Eternal Life Sept. 7.
- Velma Yoder, former houseparent for older boys at Lutheran School for the Deaf, received her Crown of Eternal Life July 29. Velma, a hearing child born to deaf parents, lost her hearing at age 2. She is fondly remembered by many for her loving, kind spirit.

What a reunion!

Over 170 alumni from Lutheran School for the Deaf held a reunion Aug. 16-22 in Detroit. People came from Washington, Hawaii, Utah, Indiana, California, Tennessee, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa and Florida for the celebration. The oldest alumnus attended Lutheran School for the Deaf 1926-31. She shared stories about the farm area on Nevada Avenue in Detroit.

The reunion coincided with the 120th anniversary of Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

A Sunday morning worship service was led by Rev. Mark Anderson, a pastor to the deaf in Northern Illinois, who is a graduate of Lutheran School for the Deaf.

"The hallways were filled with people signing, smiling and laughing, thanking God for this ministry and the impact of God's love on their lives," said Roger DeMeyere, Executive Director of Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

The Board of Directors, faculty, staff and students of

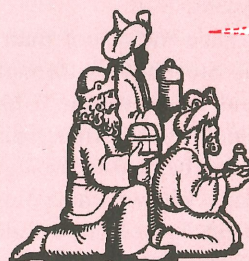
Lutheran Special Education

Ministries would like to

wish you and your family

a joyous Christmas in our

Newborn King.





Gloria Burley, Director of Michigan Special Education Ministries Program, is being used as the model for a first aid demonstration during the inservice held at the beginning of the school year.

Around the ministry

Michigan

by Gloria Burley

The beginning of a school year is always anticipated with great excitement and expectation. Now that school is well underway, we know whether or not our expectations were accurate. Once again we realize how greatly we are blessed, for God has given us so much more than we anticipated needing. He has enabled our teachers to return to their tasks with renewed physical, mental and spiritual energy as they once again dedicate their time and talents to the Christian education of handicapped children.

Serving in resource rooms are Sara Atkinson, Kathie DeMumbrum, Johanna Hilpert, Liz Plaehn, Loren Popke, Jan Schneider and Linda Schrupp. Sue Caudell has returned to our staff as a resource room teacher. Tammy Kapraun, new to our ministry, is the resource room teacher at our new setting in Frankenmuth.

Teachers at North Detroit Lutheran, the special education day school, are Tina Eising, Brenda Jenks, Noel Gregory, Dennis Pieper and Gil Theiss. Lisa Boss serves as the library/media specialist. These fine Christian teachers humbly and ably serve children with varying handicaps, from those who are learning disabled, ADD, educably mentally impaired or speech and language impaired to those who have special needs and who could not succeed without individual help. Teaching these children requires

extraordinary patience, knowledge and love. God gives each of these teachers what they need to attend to the special educational demands of each child. Pray that God will bless each teacher and student as they serve in His kingdom according to His will.

Ephphatha Center

by Kathy Krause

As autumn colors brighten our landscape, we thank God for His many blessings. Ephphatha Center has many blessings for which to be thankful.

We welcome the staff of Greenfield-Peace Lutheran School (Detroit) to partnership in our ministry as our newest on-site location. Gail Vahlbusch travels to Greenfield-Peace every Monday afternoon to work with teachers, parents and students. Through the combined efforts of the two ministries, students with special learning needs are able to experience success.

As usual, our department is busy evaluating students who have experienced difficulties in their classroom settings. The information gained from the evaluation is valuable to the future instruction and expectations placed on these students.

A true feeling of accomplishment has been felt this fall. Many, many requests have been received for our "Extended Special Education Teacher's Guide" that was written to accompany "The Simplified Catechism" from Northwestern Publishing. Calls and letters have come from Regina, Saskatchewan; Riesel, Texas; Olean, New York; and Los Gatos, California. All these

pastors and teachers are eager to have material written for those preparing for confirmation with limited reading ability. Our first 100 copies have long since been depleted and we are now mailing our second printing. Praise God!

Blessings are plentiful in the Ephphatha Center; we sing His praises for the Lord's special touch that colors our lives.

New York

by Paula Rosen

Several years ago, people in Michigan and New York had a vision: They looked forward to a day when members of the Lutheran Schools Association would provide special education services in many of their schools. Today that dream is a reality, a growing reality.

To date, Lutheran Special Education Ministries has entered into a partnership with five schools in the New York metropolitan area and one school in New Jersey. Three of these schools returned to us from last year. Two expanded services from half days to a full day or more. Still others are planning to include an on-site consultant teacher in next year's budget. Good news spreads fast.

Holy Trinity Community School, Hollis, has an on-site consultant teacher four half-days a week. This wonderful principal, Linda Mitchell, and her dedicated faculty have opened their hearts and doors to children with special needs. A resource room is probably not too far in the future for this school.

They are not unique. So many of our principals and teachers go that extra mile for a child with special needs. Teachers in our Lutheran schools are not mandated to serve children. They are directed by God's love to provide a Christian education for children. There is a tremendous amount of love at work here every day.

Illinois

by Jim Krone

We are serving 41 students in four half-time resource programs in Illinois. In addition to the resource program, our four on-site instructional consultants are working with the teachers, parents and students in another 12 Lutheran schools. The number of partnership schools increased from 11 last year to 17 for this year. Four of these 17 schools have also increased the amount of time their teacher is available to help special needs children.

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The Advocate

for Students with Special Learning Needs

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'We're reaching out—helping more children in Michigan!'

"For the last three years, I had a dream of acquiring our own staff person who could work directly with the students (with special needs) both in and out of the classrooms in our building, with our teachers on a daily basis, with parents when needed, and with public school personnel in a cooperative manner," said Jonathan Laabs, principal at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Frankenmuth, Mich.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries "had always expressed an interest in helping us do just that," Laabs added. In fact, St. Lorenz had used Lutheran Special Education Ministries personnel for the last several years to help its Board of Education members, staff and parents better understand special education and to develop a plan to better serve the students.

St. Lorenz had provided assistance to children with special learning needs for a

number of years. Until two years ago, the students who qualified for special education services were bused to the public school for a few hours each day.

By law, the public school staff could not go to St. Lorenz; the students had to come to them. At the public school, the students were taught by qualified instructors to meet their individual needs—whether it be a learning disability, speech problem, hearing problem, etc.

However, in 1991, the public school district began using "inclusive education" for all special education children. Inclusive education is where qualified children remain in their own homeroom and are taught by both special education teachers and homeroom teachers. Since the public school special education teachers could not travel to St. Lorenz, the school had to find another way to help its students.

The St. Lorenz congregation approved the funds to begin a resource room at the school this fall. Tammy Kapraun is the resource room teacher at St. Lorenz. In addition to serving about 20 children each day, Tammy will help the homeroom teachers and parents to help these special needs children.

St. Lorenz will be responsible for half the cost of the teacher, and Lutheran Special Education Ministries for the remainder. Gifts made to Lutheran Spe-

cial Education Ministries make it possible to help children with special learning needs at St. Lorenz to know Christ.

Frankenmuth, a town of about 4,000 people, is located about 100 miles north of Detroit. St. Lorenz has about 4,600 baptized members. The school has 650 students, beginning with 3-year-olds and going through the eighth grade.

Around the ministry

(Continued from page 3.)

On Aug. 18, our teachers started the new school year with excitement as they prepared for the challenges that come with helping children with special needs. This year we added a new staff person: Debbie Calabrese comes to us with six years of special education experience and a Master's Degree in special education from Concordia University, River Forest.

Two teachers, Terry Sohn and Susan Lewis, have increased the amount of time they work with our children. We are truly blessed with an outstanding staff of six teachers, all dedicated to enabling special education children to learn about the love of Jesus.

There has been much interest and excitement about our programs, both in Christian day schools and now in churches with the help of our new lesson plans offered for Sunday schools and confirmation classes for children with special learning needs. We look forward to a very exciting, productive and busy year.

The ADVOCATE for Students with Special Learning Needs
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