



Luke's graduation from high school was a happy day!

Special classes helped Luke graduate from high school

"My biggest joy was graduation day!" Luke's mother said, with the tears shining in her eyes. Last spring, Luke, 19, graduated from Lutheran High South in Chicago, Illinois.

Most parents are like Luke's mother: pleased and proud when their children successfully complete high school. But, Luke's case is special.

"We dragged him to school. We coaxed him. He would cry. He would get stomachaches," his mother said. All the way through kindergarten . . . first grade . . . second grade . . . third grade. He couldn't read; he couldn't understand the teacher or what was said. Consequently, he also had trouble with homework.

"We knew he had a handicap when he went into kindergarten," his mother said. "But we thought it was the result

of the medications he was taking—he took 12 or 13 different types of medication a day until the fifth grade." One year, Luke was hospitalized 12 times. For the next year, he had therapy every sixth hour—which meant getting up at midnight and 6 a.m. every day.

When the family moved to the city, Luke's mother placed her children into the public schools. "That was the worst experience I ever had!" she commented. The public school teachers told her Luke was retarded—and would not do anything to help him learn.

So she took him to St. Paul Lutheran School in Oak Lawn, Ill. The elementary school didn't have a special education program then, but the teachers helped Luke as much as they could. Plus, he learned about how much God loves him and how special he is to God.

"I had been asking for a long time if there was any program available in the private schools for a disabled child like Luke. One day, when my girlfriend went to church, there was a special brochure in the church bulletin from Lutheran Special Education Ministries which explained their special program for special children. She told me about it right away, and at first I didn't believe her. Then the next day I called and set up an appointment. This was the start of Luke's success in school," Luke's mother said.

Luke agreed, "All the special education teachers have helped me so much through the years."

How did the teachers help Luke? First, they recorded books on audio-cassettes so Luke could listen to the words. For Luke, it was like a burden being lifted from his shoulders: He didn't have to read the textbooks for himself (something he had a difficult time trying to do). He knew the same material as the other students, and he answered the same test questions, but he answered verbally rather than by writing.

Also, notetaking was very hard for Luke because of poor coordination in his hands. Some teachers had told Luke it was his responsibility to take notes. With the help of Lutheran Special Education Ministries' teachers, they finally realized that he wasn't physically capable of taking notes, and they allowed other students to give Luke copies of their notes.

By studying this way—with the notes and cassettes—Luke was able to study physical science, psychology, medical biology as well as the regular curriculum in high school.

"It was unbelievable," his mother commented. "I couldn't believe that

(Continued on next page.)

Around the ministry

Michigan

by Gloria Burley, Director
Michigan Program

As each new school year begins, there are two things on which we can rely. One is that the work of our Lord will continue through the faithful teachers, consultants and administrators of Lutheran Special Education Ministries. The other is that there will be new faces in our midst and new opportunities to serve.

Four teachers have joined the Michigan staff. **Patti Kuppe** and **Diane Parker** are returning teachers. These women took some time off from the classroom to raise their own children and now are ready to resume their places in the teaching ministry. They will be sharing a half-time position at Immanuel, Macomb.

Tami Bierlein is the new consultant for Peace, Saginaw. She is actively involved in team teaching and offering support to teachers in curriculum modification for students with learning problems. She is available for parents who wish to discuss their concerns about homework or organizational problems. Another teacher new to the ministry, **Judy Hawkins**, is also returning to the classroom after raising a family. Mrs. Hawkins has had extensive experience in the classroom and is a welcome addition to Bethany, Detroit. She serves as the resource room teacher/consultant in our first self-contained classroom. May the Lord bless the efforts of these talented and dedicated teachers.

Welcomed into partnership this year are four new school locations. Gail Vahlbusch is consulting at **St. Clare of**

Montefalco two mornings a week. Jan Schneider is consulting at **Emmanuel, Dearborn, and Trinity, Wyandotte**, for a half day per week at each school. Also joining Lutheran Special Education Ministries this year is **Bethany Lutheran School**, the only Detroit school with a resource room. This room also serves as a self-contained room for children who are ready for some mainstream experiences.

The principals of these schools are very supportive of Christian education for children with special learning needs. They are enthusiastic about the services provided by our teachers, because it allows them to share the living Christ with these children on a daily basis. How wonderful it is to be able to join together to bring the Word of God to all His children.

Your support makes this ministry a reality. We thank God for you and pray that He continues to bless you as you serve in His kingdom.

Luke

(Continued from Page 1.)

he passed every one of those classes, and most of them were with a 'C.'” Even during high school, the resource room teacher recorded textbooks onto cassettes.

Without the help from Lutheran Special Education Ministries, Luke's mother believes, “I don't think Luke would have graduated from high school.”

Luke's older brother went to public school; he told his mother Luke would never survive it—Luke needed to go someplace where he would receive understanding and help for his disabilities.

“I thank God I found Lutheran Special Education Ministries!”

An impact

What words best describe the impact that Lutheran Special Education Ministries teachers had on Luke? “Patience . . . and success,” his mother replied.

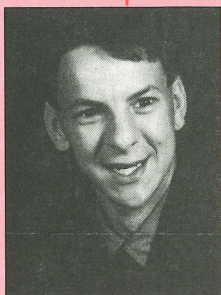
“I was happy for the help I was receiving from the special education teachers. I was relieved from all the

trouble I had in school. I had a lot of stress, and it was very hard for me,” Luke commented.

“The special education teachers never gave up on Luke,” his mother added, “which was encouraging for us. There were many times we were ready to give up, but the teachers kept encouraging us to go on. They helped Luke to understand his classes and pass all of them. The regular teachers didn't understand how to help Luke, but the special education teachers knew what to do. They were patient and understanding, and knew that Luke could do it.”

A word of advice

Luke's mother had advice for all parents: “If you feel there is a problem and you are not sure what to do, speak with your child's teacher. If you both feel there is a problem, don't wait. Get help right away. I don't think there was any other program that taught Luke more patience. I don't know how they did it, but the teachers from Lutheran Special Education Ministries had so much patience with Luke. They taught both him—and me—patience.”



Ephphatha Center

by Kathy Krause
Ephphatha Center

Preparation . . . a time to put in proper order or become ready. As we await and prepare for the celebration of our Savior's birth, we reflect on how we prepare children to receive the knowledge of their Lord.

Many children have difficulty reading Sunday school materials or even the Bibles that we place in their hands. Some children have difficulties expressing their knowledge in words or on paper. How can pastors or teachers know when the wisdom they impart is taking hold and growing?

It is possible that a pastor may not have concrete evidence that a child with special needs has fully understood the lessons or concepts. However, it is our job as a ministry to give pastors and teachers the tools so that material is presented to these children in a format that suits their particular learning style or ability.

Our center maintains a resource library of available programs and Bibles designed for individuals with special learning needs. Acting as consultants, we help congregations locate a program to fit the needs of a child. Once material is in place, the power of the Holy Spirit supplements and enriches

our human efforts, providing a child with both earthly and heavenly guidance.

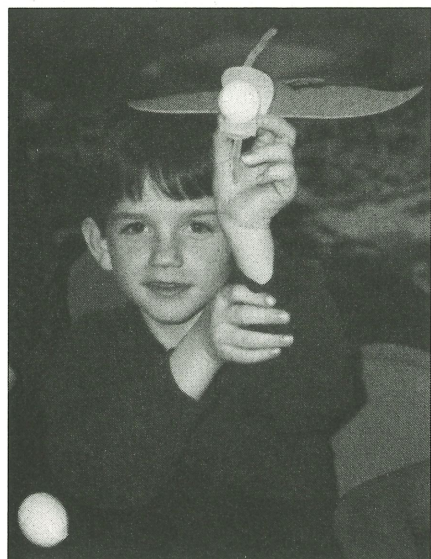
As your family prepares for the holiday season and the joyous birth of Jesus, remember the preparation of others who may not yet know the love of Christ because of special learning difficulties. Pray for these children and for our ministry as we strive to help them learn about their Lord.

New York

**by Paula Rosen, Director
New York Program**

Shamir, Simei, Joseph, Dominique, Sangeeta, Chadwick, Jorge, Michael, Devin. These are some of the names of the children we serve here in New York. The list reflects the diversity of cultures our schools serve. What it does not reflect is the diversity of needs Lutheran Special Education Ministries serves daily in Lutheran schools. We enable children with emotional problems, learning disabilities, language delays and many more to learn.

These children learn the Word in two ways. First, we help them with basic academic skills so they may take part in learning the Word as our Lord taught us through the Bible. Each day, we meet more and more children who are helped by this ministry. Schools that are not equipped to help those with special needs yet refer children to schools with programs provided by Lutheran Special Education Ministries. The need is so great and the percentage of religious schools that provide



One of the students being helped by Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

'Ultimate gift'

Dear Christian Friends,

When I was asked to write an article for the "Advocate," my first thought was, wouldn't it be a privilege to write a letter to all the readers and convey the image that we were sitting in our family room having a conversation about what we could do to help children with special learning handicaps to receive their Christian education and learn to know and love Jesus.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries provides that mission to the young people who would be a kinder and more gentle generation in the future. The first thought that follows is, what can I do to help?

Lutheran Special Education Ministries has been blessed by your generous and loving support of donation gifts. This is the first step in walking with God as He does His work through us.

The next step would be to make an ultimate gift. There are many ways to continue to help God in His work: a bequest in your will, naming Lutheran Special Education Ministries beneficiary on your life insurance, trusts, or annuities, and by keeping our ministry in your prayers.

What a satisfaction to know that we can continue to help even after we have left this world to move on to that promise of eternal life for those who believe in Jesus Christ.

So, onward Christian soldiers, lift high the Cross and let us join in the battle against darkness and evil by educating our children and giving them that opportunity to learn about Jesus and His love for them.

Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you and may God bless you and the Holy Spirit give you inspiration as you think about the way to be a part of the mission of Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

Yours in Christ,

Harold Zink
Director of Finance and Property

special education services is so small that we are truly unique.

As Lutheran Special Education Ministries enters its fourth year of service to children in New York, we are able to say we have made a difference, a difference not only in children's lives, but in helping teachers, parents and administrators have a better understanding of children with special needs. We have made the community more aware and provide families with emotional support. At this time for thankfulness, Lutheran Special Education Ministries of New York feels very grateful for those who support our work. Thank you.

Illinois

**by Jim Krone, Director
Illinois Program**

As we move from the golden days of autumn toward the joyous Christmas season, we find our ministry in Illinois growing in leaps and bounds.

We are now serving 43 students in three half-time and one full-time resource room program in Illinois. Our six on-site instructional consultants are working with the teachers, parents and students in another 14 Lutheran schools. Four more schools have expressed interest in programs for next year and present partnership schools are talking of increasing services.

With our steady growth, there was a need for a development person in Illinois. We are excited about the hiring of Dianna Bonfield for that position, who began Nov. 7. We are happy to have her as part of our team and feel that she will be a great asset to our ministry here.

We are blessed with dedicated teachers who always go a step further in serving these special children. We thank God for this blessing and pray for His strength and wisdom for these teachers. God promises to be with us, enabling and empowering us to accomplish His ministry.

The Advocate

for Students with Special Learning Needs

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

Address corrections requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DETROIT, MI
PERMIT NO. 3699



Lloyd Haertling is the 1994 Ephphatha Award winner. Pictured, from left: Lutheran Special Education Ministries Executive Director Roger DeMeyere, Haertling and Special Lutheran Classes Board of Directors President Dr. Delphin "Bud" Schulz.

1994 Winner:

Haertling wins Ephphatha Award

Lloyd W. Haertling, executive director of Special Lutheran Classes in St. Louis, Mo., received the 1994 Ephphatha Award. Lutheran Special Education Ministries Executive Director Roger DeMeyere made the surprise presentation at Haertling's retirement dinner Sept. 25.

The Ephphatha Award was established in 1984 at a time when dramatic changes had taken place in Lutheran Special Education Ministries' services (moving from a residential school for deaf children to a more inclusive special education ministry).

The changes in our ministry during the past two decades led to the development of our current national vision,

which is to reach out to Lutheran and other Christian denominations to open the doors of schools and congregations for children who are handicapped with special learning needs.

Consistent with this, the Ephphatha Award is presented to recognize and encourage Christian education for special needs children. Every year, the award is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the Christian education of handicapped children in the congregation, community or church at large.

Lloyd Haertling has certainly made outstanding contributions to the Christian education of special needs children. He taught for almost 40 years

and distinguished himself as an advocate for handicapped children during the past 21 years as Executive Director of Special Lutheran Classes in St. Louis.

He orchestrated many new, innovative programs under the auspices of Special Lutheran Classes, including resource rooms, consultant programs, early childhood screening, parent education programs and academically accelerated programs. He has been involved in many professional organizations, like the Council for Exceptional Children and the Learning Disabilities Association, and has received many recognitions over the years.

The Aramaic word, Ephphatha, means "to be opened" or "to open." Jesus used this word when He healed the deaf man. Lutheran Special Education Ministries' prays that others will follow Haertling's example and share a vision "to open" the doors of Christian education wider in ministry to children with special learning needs.

May God continue to bless Lloyd and others who share this vision.

The ADVOCATE for Students with
Special Learning Needs
—USPS 150-480

Published quarterly by Lutheran Special
Education Ministries (formerly Lutheran
School for the Deaf), 6861 E. Nevada,
Detroit, MI 48234, (313) 368-1220.
Fax Number: (313) 368-0159

Editor: Gregg Braun, Director of
Development

Managing Editor: Roger DeMeyere,
Executive Director

Send all communication regarding the
editing, and ALL ADDRESS CHANGES
to the address above.