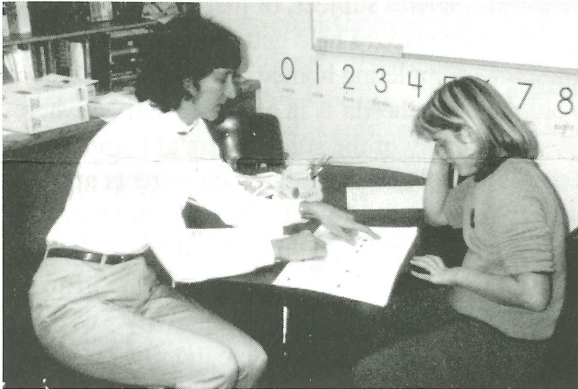


# The Advocate

*"Enabling children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education since 1873."*

Spring-Summer 2003 *Lutheran Special Education Ministries* Volume 72 Number 2

## Through God's Grace -- Another Year



Linda Kalk, a Lutheran Special Education Ministries teacher in the Northcentral Region, works on math with Ellen, a fifth-grader.

Through God's grace Lutheran Special Education Ministries has served children with special learning needs for 130 years. In the past year alone the ministry, through all of its programs, has touched the lives of more than 4,000 children. And each year the need continues to grow.

During the 2002-03 school year Lutheran Special Education Ministries reached out across the United States to bring the word of God to children in nearly 100 Lutheran and other Christian schools. Because each of the children we serve is a unique creation of God, so are his or her special learning needs. Some have difficulty reading. Others need extra help in math. For yet others, their special learning needs include behavioral and attention concerns.

At the end of the school year teachers, parents and students everywhere take account of progress made and lessons learned. Success varies with each child. Special education classrooms are no different.

While some are able to take giant steps early on, others begin with baby steps and grow from there.

One constant in every Lutheran Special Education Ministries classroom is the presence of Jesus. He is the heart of our ministry.

In addition to the children served through classroom programs, Lutheran Special

Education Ministries also provides nationwide consulting services. Churches that minister to children who have special learning needs are encouraged to contact the national office or a regional office for assistance. Pastors, directors of Christian education and volunteer teachers are directed to materials and services to assist them in

ministering to children who have special learning needs through Sunday school, vacation Bible school and confirmation classes.

As this school year ends, Lutheran Special Education Ministries' special education professionals already are planning for another year of reaching out to children with special learning needs in order to share the word of God with them and to enable them to lead full, productive lives.



Angie Goldey, a teacher in the Great Lakes Region, teaches reading to two of her students.

For information and assistance please visit our home on the Internet at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org) or contact one of the Lutheran Special Education Ministries offices listed below.

### **National Office**

For general information and for those who are in states not listed below.  
(313) 368-1220, Ext. 100

### **Great Lakes Region**

Michigan, Ohio and Indiana  
(313) 368-1220, Ext. 114

### **Midwest Region**

Illinois, Iowa  
(708) 209-3344

### **Northcentral Region**

Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin  
(651) 603-6235

### **Northeast Region**

New York, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia  
(718) 736-2295

### **Southcentral Region**

Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana  
(817) 488-9949

### **Southwest Region**

California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah  
(818) 988-7667



# Homework Help for Students and Parents

"I can't make my child do his homework." This is a common complaint among most parents. Lutheran Special Education Ministries Teacher/Consultant Jennifer Bower found that this certainly was true of the parents at Bethesda Lutheran School in Chicago.

In order to address this problem, she started the Homework Help program in addition to her regular special education duties at Bethesda.

"Every Wednesday, for an hour after school, I sit with the children, some with and others without special learning needs, and help them with their homework," Bower explains. "We work in the church basement and are spread out at different tables. They are allowed to talk only when asking questions."

In order to monitor the talking rule, Bower writes the word "candy" on the chalkboard. Each time the students begin to talk, a letter is taken from the word. If two or more letters are left at



Teacher/Consultant Jennifer Bower works with Michelle, a student at Bethesda Lutheran School.

the end of the session, each student receives a piece of candy.

"We have found that this program is very helpful to the students, parents and teachers," she adds. "The students get the extra help they need, and they also tend to get started on and actually do their homework because they are still in a school setting. It also eliminates distractions they may have at home such as television, siblings and

telephone calls."

One of the bonuses is that parents don't have to argue with their children to get their homework done and children and parents have more time to spend doing family activities.

Homework Help is set up so that teachers may recommend students who they feel need extra help on a particular homework assignment, in a general subject, or just because they need extra help getting organized and completing homework assignments.

Bethesda is in an urban setting where many of the students are at home and unsupervised until their parents are home from work. So another bonus of Homework Help is that it keeps these children at school participating in an organized, productive activity.

"The goal is to expand this program to more days of the week," says Bower. "Although it does not work for every child, we are experiencing success with many children. It is just another way to help our students become successful."

## Thrivent Financial for Lutherans™

# GivingPlus Program Announced

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has launched GivingPlus, a \$20 million member-directed gift-giving program in support of Lutheran educational institutions and outreach ministry organizations. Thrivent is the merged entity of Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) and Lutheran Brotherhood (LB).

In the past, Lutheran Special Education Ministries received financial support from the matching gift programs of AAL and LB. The ministry has qualified as a Giving Plus recipient and is enrolled in the program. Donors should be aware that the parameters of GivingPlus are different from the former programs operated by AAL and LB.

GivingPlus is available to all

Thrivent Financial members whether or not they own Thrivent products.

Members who own Thrivent Financial products now can give a gift ranging between \$50 and \$400 to an eligible Lutheran institution or organization, and Thrivent will contribute 50 cents for every dollar given that is in compliance with the program's guidelines. Members who do not own Thrivent Financial products can participate in GivingPlus with gifts ranging between \$50 and \$100. To encourage volunteerism, the member gift range is increased by an additional \$100 for members who volunteer at least 25 hours annually for the recipient organization.

There are other differences between the former AAL and LB programs and the current Thrivent program. The

following are some important changes to consider:

The GivingPlus minimum donation for matching is \$50.

Only one donation may be matched per qualified receiving organization.

There is a limit of two organizations for members and one organization for non-members

A total of \$20 million is available for GivingPlus during 2003. Once Thrivent reaches that amount, no more matches will be made for the year.

Member donations are matched at the rate of 50 cents per dollar.

Thrivent members may receive application forms for GivingPlus by contacting Lutheran Special Education Ministries or by calling Thrivent at: 1-800-THRIVENT (1-800-847-4836).



# Around the Ministry

## Southwest Region

**By Laura Sauer, Director**

Psalm 105 says: "Oh give thanks to the Lord! Make known His deeds among the peoples."

Here are some of His deeds in our Southwest Region.

- Four dedicated teachers teaching 110 children
- Teacher Garry Unger receiving his master's degree
- Presenting two workshops at the Early Childhood Conference of the Pacific Southwest District-Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
- Teacher Ashley Steele moving to Arizona where we will begin our partnership with Shepherd of the Desert in Scottsdale
- Generous donations from the parents of our students at Salem in Orange, Calif.
- Teacher Abby Bartels going to Uganda, Africa, to serve the Lord
- Two new partnership schools for the fall and an increase in service at a current school
- Teacher Heather Schulz having her students write letters to servicemen away from home
- Children learning that Jesus is their Lord and Savior and He has made them special
- The beginning of our fourth year of service in May 2003

## Midwest Region

**By Susan Lewis, Director**

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! These are exciting, hope-filled days. Our support council met for the first time in March. Council members Barbara Burns, Warren Gast, Jr., and Gary Wenzel have identified some interesting potential resources and are in the process of expanding council membership.

The first year of the SERVE Project

has come to a close. Volunteers came to monthly sessions to share success stories as well as their concern about how they may best help the at-risk learners at their Lutheran schools.

A special word of thanks to St. Peter Lutheran School in Arlington Heights, Ill., and St. Paul Lutheran School in Milford, Ill., for their support of our programs and services with their chapel offerings.

Our teachers are busy charting their students' progress and preparing plans for the upcoming school year. The staff also is studying recently reported research findings about how children learn to read and what specific type of instruction is best for which specific type of learner.



## Northeast Region

**By Lois Dierlam, Director**

The Northeast Region has received a Lutheran Crusader Grant, which will be used to purchase updated diagnostic assessments and a Wilson Reading Program. Needless to say, we are quite excited about these purchases and will be looking forward to putting the Wilson Program to use, as well as having up-to-date assessment programs to use in September.

Regional Director Lois Dierlam presented workshops in New York and New Jersey to early childhood educators.

All northeast teachers are busy completing state testing with their students and are looking forward to starting year-end activities with them.

## Great Lakes Region

**By Kathy Krause, Director**

"How Great Thou Art!"

One of the most beloved hymns in our Christian church, but also a great truth. Our God is awesome... which reminds me of a more modern Christian song, "Our God is an Awesome God". No matter how you sing it, we are privileged to live in the loving arms of a Heavenly Father who cared so much for us that He sacrificed His one and only Son so that we have assurance of eternity together.

As this current school year ends, we marvel at all the accomplishments of the children within our care: children who are now reading; children who are now completing math problems; children who now feel comfortable writing sentences and paragraphs.

However, more than all of the academic accomplishments, these are children who know and love their Savior more than ever before!

As you enjoy the sunshine this summer, remember the Son that shines in your heart and sing His praise, "How Great Thou Art!"

## Northcentral Region

**By Dennis Senne, Director**

A financial contribution and the following note were recently received from the grandparents of one of our students: "Our granddaughter is doing so well – Because she has been in the Lutheran Special Education Ministries program."

It is a joy for grandparents, parents and teachers to see the growth and development that children experience when caring individuals surround them!

Lutheran Special Education Ministries supporter Mike Bratlie joined the Regional Support Council at our last meeting. Mike brings our council membership to five. At our April 7 meeting Dave Roth, Minnesota South District- the Lutheran Church –



## Around the Ministry

Continued from page 3

Missouri Synod assistant to the president, shared the blessings and challenges the Lutheran Special Education Ministries program has brought to the Northcentral District over the past four years. He said that the blessings to children and their families are numerous and that the major challenge continues to center on locating adequate funds.

Two wonderful opportunities were provided to share the Lutheran Special Education Ministries story. Our display was at the South Dakota Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod convention May 5-6 in Sioux Falls. We were also at the Minnesota South District Convention June 12-14 at Concordia University-St. Paul.

Growth of the partnership program continues with expansion at one of the existing schools and three schools starting new programs.

## Kathy Krause to Retire



Kathy Krause, Great Lakes Regional director, is scheduled to retire June 30 after 17 years of service to Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

She holds a bachelor's degree in regular education, special education and early childhood education and a master's degree in learning disabilities. Krause began her career with Lutheran Special Education Ministries in 1986 as the resource room teacher at her home congregation, St. Peter, Macomb, Mich. A year later the special education program at Immanuel Lutheran School in Macomb was added to her duties.

In 1987 she moved from the classrooms to the ministry's Detroit headquarters and she was named instructional consultant. Since then, she also has held the positions of

### Southcentral Region By Gayle Grotjan, Director

Eight Lutheran schools in the Houston area and another five in the Dallas area have expressed interest in forming partnerships with Lutheran Special Education Ministries. Administrators from those schools are working with their boards to identify the financial means for supporting the partnerships. Christ Our Savior Lutheran School, Coppell, Texas, under the leadership of Curt Riske, was the first school in Texas to sign a partnership agreement.

Initial services to students began through classroom observations and referral for further educational evaluation. Regional Director Gayle Grotjan has responded to requests for help with specific students by observing the students in their classrooms and gathering background information from parents and teachers.

director of the national Ephphatha Center (later renamed Resource Center); director of Michigan programs; and director of Great Lakes Region (encompassing Michigan, Indiana and Ohio).

Under her direction, the region has grown from programs in 13 schools in Michigan to more than 40 programs in a three-state area.

"My work with Lutheran Special Education Ministries has been a blessing," Krause said. "What a joy to serve the Lord by working with His precious gift of children. I have gained so much knowledge as well as so many friendships that I will take with me. This is not a goodbye but a see-you-later."

She looks forward to spending more time with her husband, Mike; daughter Kari; daughter and son-in-law Shane and Marc Schwichtenberg; and granddaughters Abby, 2, and Katy, 6 months.

A written report then is generated, including new alternatives for supporting the student in the classroom and suggestions that can be implemented in the home environment as well. Parents, in particular, appreciate this process as it helps to identify strategies for helping their child without making the child aware of the changes.

Recruitment is underway for special education teachers and diagnosticians to serve in Texas. The Texas District-Lutheran Church Missouri Synod School Ministry Office, active recruitment on the part of the regional director, and "word of mouth" have helped to identify qualified professionals who are interested in serving Lutheran Special Education Ministries in this new region.

*Campbell's*  
**Labels  
for  
Education**

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, Lutheran Special Education Ministries redeems thousands of labels from Campbell's soup (and other Campbell's products) for classroom supplies and teaching aids. Individuals and groups interested in helping with this program may contact Kathy Baker-Seagram at the National Office, (313) 368-1220, Ext. 100.

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