



# LSEM The Advocate

Lutheran Special Education Ministries

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

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## Our Vision



**Reach...**  
*across the United States*

**Serve...**  
*schools & congregations*

**Enable...**  
*children with special learning needs to know Jesus and lead fulfilling lives*

*"In order to get into the Arctic wonderland you need to duck down and go through an igloo made of chicken wire and cotton batting."*



## The Arctic Is Cool

Those of us who live in Michigan sometimes feel like we live in the Arctic tundra but the students in my LSEM room at **Trinity Lutheran School in St. Joseph, Michigan** got to experience what it might really be like. Outside in the hallway are pictures of arctic whales attached to lengths of yarn that show how long each whale is. The blue whale string goes all the way down the long hallway and around the corner to the drinking fountain.

In order to get into the **Arctic wonderland** you need to duck down and go through an igloo made of chicken wire and cotton batting. Once inside you see life size replicas of 14 different arctic animals; a 14 foot walrus with his 3 feet long tusks takes up one whole side of the room, while a 10 foot polar bear towers over the doorway, a wolverine sits high up on a book shelf ready to pounce, along with a snowy owl and a snow goose that are suspended from the ceiling.



*Mrs. Lubbers welcomes her students into the Arctic wonderland.*



*Life size replicas of arctic animals hang from the ceiling.*

Doing an inclusive unit each year and living it out in the classroom has many benefits. The number one benefit is that the students love it! Hunter said, *"I never knew learning could be so much fun."* Caidyn told a new student, *"I know it seems like a lot of work now but wait until it is all done. It is so cool!"* Another benefit is that it gives these students, who struggle with learning, an opportunity to **"show off"** their knowledge to their classmates and to their parents. It definitely increases their self confidence. Finally, it brings every student in the school through the LSEM resource room doors at least once a year. They see the resource room as a place where fun learning takes place!

After the Arctic unit was complete the LSEM students were challenged to write about their experience. Ellis wrote, *"It was exciting to walk through the igloo and to see all the animals in the room. I liked talking about the Arctic to the kids from our school. I loved all the things I did in the Arctic!"* Caidyn wrote, *"I learned all about Eskimos and how they like the name Inuits better. Our blubber experiment helped me see how blubber keeps the animals warm."* Sarah said, *"For our Arctic unit we all did lots of research and preparation so we could teach the whole school about the Arctic. I think that both the teachers and the students enjoyed coming to see our Arctic imitation."* Before the reports were even off the walls Jordan asked, *"So, what are we doing next year?"*



Thank you LSEM school partners and friends for your support that is making it possible for us to make learning fun for everyone. You are a blessing to me and to the children we serve.

*Jill Lubbers, LSEM Teacher  
Trinity Lutheran School, St. Joseph, MI*

## From The President - The Choice Is His



Jim Krone  
President/CEO

*"There is a huge industry focus on why people make choices."*



There certainly are many choices we make during our lifetime. As time progresses it seems as though our choices have increased ten fold. At the grocery store we have sixteen different brands of beans and twelve different brands of ice-cream. We even have five different grocery stores to pick from and it's not just food. There are several different places to make choices about clothes, appliances, phones, cars, and even Christian Ministries. The Lutheran fraternal organization "**Thrivent Financial For Lutherans**" is even asking it's members to make a choice about what charitable organization to fund. There is a huge industry focus on "why people make choices".

If you are reading this newsletter then I know you made the choice to be a friend to LSEM and that makes you a friend of mine. What I enjoy most in my new role as President/CEO at LSEM is reading all the notes and comments you send to us and I would love to hear your story.

As I mentioned in the winter issue of "The Advocate" I want to get your feedback through a short survey to help us answer the "**why**" question that

will enable us to better serve children who have special learning needs. The survey will also give you an opportunity to tell us how you became a friend to LSEM.

To take the survey you can go to our website at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org) and follow the link "**Tell Your Story**" on the homepage. If you prefer, you may call the national office toll free at **888-588-LSEM (5736) ext. 107** and someone will be able to take your responses over the phone.

Your feedback is invaluable. At LSEM we want to do all we can to provide the necessary choices for children who have special learning needs in our Christian schools and congregations.

Jesus made a choice. He chose us. Why? The answer is love. I hope to hear from you. **To God Alone Be The Glory!**

Your friend in Christ,  
Jim Krone  
President/CEO



## Excellence with Humility - An LSEM Teacher Is Honored

We are blessed at LSEM with extraordinary teachers. One of those teachers, Kathy Meier, at Mayer Lutheran High School in Minnesota, was recently awarded the **2010 Honor Teacher Award for grades 9-12 from the Minnesota Independent School Forum (MISF)**, but you would never know it. For Kathy it's not about recognition for her commitment to serving God's children, it's about enabling her students with special learning needs to know Jesus and lead fulfilling lives.

The MISF is comprised of thirty-one accredited independent and private secondary schools throughout the state of Minnesota. The MISF is the only nonpublic awards event that recognizes teachers for their exceptional work within their school and in their communities throughout the state.

You may have heard the expression, "she has a heart as big as Texas." Well, Kathy's

heart is bigger! Her teaching goes far beyond the classroom and touches the lives of her students in a big way. Jeff Howell, LSEM's Director of Programs and Services says, "*Kathy is an amazing teacher and has such a humble spirit. I didn't even know she received teacher of the year award from MISF until much later. Kathy always strives for excellence with humility.*"

The SunPatriot Newspaper quotes Kathy as saying, "*I'm a little uncomfortable with all of the attention. Receiving this award is very exciting.*"

*However, I consider being named MISF Honor Teacher a shared award with my co-workers at Mayer Lutheran High School.*" We thank God for Kathy's leadership and for her humble spirit that is impacting not only the lives of her students, but her colleagues too.

***Congratulations Kathy. You are an inspiration to us all!***



Kathy Meier, LSEM Teacher pictured here with students of Mayer Lutheran High School, Brent Litzau, left, and Dustin Sievert.



Picture provided by Carver County News  
Photographer Todd Moen

## Invitation to Network with Other Christians Serving Children with Special Learning Needs



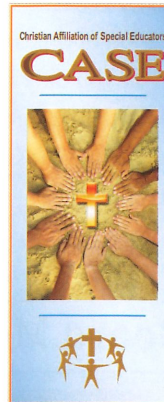
Susan Lewis  
Resource Center  
Director

Are you a Christian special educator, consultant, or tutor serving children with special learning needs? Perhaps you might be a teacher or administrator serving students with special learning needs in a Christian school who is looking for additional support by networking with others serving in the same capacity. Christian Affiliation of Special Educators or CASE may provide just the support you need.

Individuals who join CASE enjoy networking opportunities to discuss and share ideas with other members locally and nationally. Web-based in-service materials provide members with access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CASE members also benefit with discounts to local and national CASE conferences and

workshops. Toll-free phone consultations with a special education professional are available and encouraged. Members will enjoy borrowing materials from the lending library, quarterly web-based newsletters, and an annual mailing of helpful resources and materials.

To become a CASE member, register on-line at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org). For more information, contact us toll-free at 1-888-488-LSEM (5736), or email us at [CASE@luthsped.org](mailto:CASE@luthsped.org).



## Brochures Added to Learning Differences in the Church Series

In support of promoting the inclusion of children with special learning needs in Christ-centered church and school activities, LSEM's Resource Center recently published four additional brochures in its Learning Differences in the Church series. The brochures focus on serving populations of children with the following challenges:

- Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD)
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- English Language Learners

Each brochure provides insight into the background and specific indicators associated with each learning issue. Patterns of strengths and struggles are identified. Lists of potential strategies and resources one may find useful in aiding the learning process for such a learner are also provided in each brochure.

These brochures were made possible through a generous grant from the **National Lutheran Women's Missionary League**. Copies of these brochures as well as the other six in the series may be ordered by going to our website at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org) and following the links either to the Publications or Programs & Services Resource Materials page, or contacting our **Resource Center toll-free at 1-888-488-LSEM (5736)**.



### CASE Conference March 22-23, 2011 Pre-LEA Convocation Event

Attention special educators join us for our first national conference. LSEM is partnering with **Lutheran Education Association (LEA)** by hosting a featured Disability Awareness Lab at their 2011 Convocation in Cincinnati, OH.

Visit our website at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org) for more information on attending or if you would like to exhibit .



Students at Trinity First  
Lutheran School in St. Paul, MN.

*"Two are better than one. If one falls down, his friend can help him up."*

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-10*

## A Note of Thanks

We are blessed to have the support of some fine organizations that are making a difference in the lives of children with special learning needs. We recently received a grant from a new partner, **Junior League of Detroit**, as well as from the **LWML of Michigan, Minnesota South, and Northern Illinois Districts**.

*Thank You!*



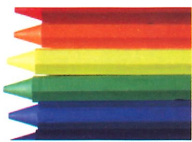
## Pray For You

Are you in need of prayer? Do you have any requests? Our national office staff meets daily Mon-Fri at 9:00am to pray. You may email your prayer requests to [lsem@luthsped.org](mailto:lsem@luthsped.org) or call our national office toll free at 888-488-LSEM(5736) and we will include your request with our daily prayers.

*Campbell's*

**Labels  
for  
Education**<sup>TM</sup>

**Free Supplies!**



Thank you to everyone for sending in your Campbell Soup labels. We are redeeming them for classroom supplies. Please keep them coming!

## Thrivent Choice

**Attention Thrivent Members.** You will have an opportunity to choose "**Lutheran Special Education Ministries**" when designating your "**Choice Dollars**" through the new charitable grant program from Thrivent Financial. For more information about the program contact your Thrivent representative.

Thank you for considering LSEM as one of your choices!

### The Advocate

is published two times a year by  
**Lutheran Special Education Ministries**  
6861 East Nevada St, Suite 2  
Detroit, Michigan 48234-2983  
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## Remembering the Widow's Mite

Not long ago we received a \$10 donation from one of our friends. She wrote a note inside apologizing because that's all she could give and signed it "*With a Prayer & Love.*" When Jim Krone, LSEM's President/CEO shared the note with me my heart was filled with thankfulness for this beautiful gift that was given out of such selfless love. I then recalled the parable of the widow's mite and how God reminds us that it is not about the amount of money given, but the spirit in which it is given. Her mite was as pleasing to God as a proportionate gift from a wealthy person, and her prayers on behalf of God's special children are priceless.

What a blessing it was to receive her note and to know that she is praying for LSEM. Why do we believe that prayer is so important? In the book of Ecclesiastes 4:14 it says, "*though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not easily broken*" We believe our friends, God, and LSEM are a strand of three and cannot be easily broken. With God at the center we will have all we need when we need it, especially in the tough times. Prayer is, and has been for more than 137 years our most essential resource.

If you only have a mite to give take heart. God is pleased with our mites when they are given in the right spirit, and we are thankful. But if all you have is time, we ask that you pray. Pray for God's wisdom and provision for LSEM. We are praying for you too and we are thankful.

*Grace Lorano  
Communications Coordinator*

## Board Member Retires



Reverend Wilton Fluegge, bottom right with his wife Victoria, retires from the LSEM Board of Trustees after 34 years of service. Also pictured are board members top left to right are; Karen Russell, Ernie Fackler, Terry Davis and Don Rutter.

Thank you Pastor Fluegge for your many years of service to God's special children. May God continue to bless you in all you do!

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing

Our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing was a big success. It was a great day of fun and fellowship and the weather was spectacular. Plans are already underway for our 6<sup>th</sup> annual outing in 2011. Watch for details to come in the near future.

We would like to thank **Thrivent Financial For Lutherans, Southeast Oakland, West Macomb and Western Wayne Chapters** for their support through their Care Abounds in Communities Program.

Thank you everyone for supporting our golf outing and for your feedback. We look forward to another great event next year.



*LSEM President/CEO, Jim Krone (left), accepts the matching gift check from Jim Riske of Thrivent Financial For Lutherans W. Macomb Chapter.*