

LSA's Apple Bytes



Promoting Lutheran education in the metro New York area.

www.lsany.org

"And Jesus took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them." *Mark 10:16*

December 2012

Hope in the Face of Darkness

And the crowds asked him (John the Baptist), 'What then should we do?' - Luke 3:10

After the tragic events last Friday in Newtown, CT, many of us are asking this same question. The anguish over the loss of vibrant young lives has affected people all over the country and the entire world. It is felt in schools where safety is now questioned and in homes where families feel more vulnerable. There are no easy answers - only complex issues involving guns and mental health and bureaucracy. As Christians, we grieve, we console and we pray. In the face of darkness, we turn to the Light of the World for comfort, strength and hope.

The season of Advent calls us to wait - not passively, but with anticipation and action. We are invited to acknowledge the spaces in our lives where shifts in our perspectives, attitudes and behaviors are needed. As John the Baptist prepared for Jesus' ministry, he called on crowds of people to turn from their sins - to be baptized. And when the people asked, "What then should we do?" - John told them to share, be honest, and treat one another kindly. Enuma Okoro, author of *Silence and Other Surprising Invitations of Advent*, offers, "God's self-revelation and promised fulfillment is always intended for healing and reconciliation in the larger community. We must ask ourselves how we can hold vigil for the groaning of humanity that is larger and more expansive than our own." *What then should we do?*

We live in a broken world where love and hope are desperately needed. Our Lutheran schools are committed to sharing Jesus' love, teaching forgiveness and trust in God because He is faithful to His promises. Here's a beautiful paraphrase from Max Lucado's *He Chose the Nails*: God loved *me* so much that He couldn't bear the thought of eternity without *me*. Jesus was born into the world to provide hope and healing. We can bear witness to that Hope in our communities by how we respond to the horror committed in Newtown. Will it serve as a wake-up call to take action or will we let it fade and then get on with life?

In these final days before Christmas, may your heart be filled with the wonderful gift of Jesus and the hope He brings to the world.

Peace,

Debbie Cook

Director of Communications



Superstorm Sandy Cancels Conferences

The 2012 Conference for Administrators of Independent and Religious Schools (CAIRS) was canceled due to Hurricane Sandy. Typically LSA's annual trek to Albany enables Linda Mitchell, executive director, along with Corinne Di Stephan, director of funded programs, plus a half dozen LSA administrators to participate in workshops and advocacy on behalf of independent and religious schools. More than 400 educators from across New York State were to take part. Lutheran Schools Association is part of a coalition that includes Agudath Israel of America, Association of Christian Schools International, Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, NYS Association of Independent Schools, and the NYS Catholic Conference.

A week later, LSA's Fall Professional Development Conference for Pre-K through Grade 12 was also canceled. This conference was to focus on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and to have been the highlight of the year. Since schools look to LSA to provide the most current educational topics, Linda and Corinne have been working with administrators to schedule regional workshops on the CCSS. Thank you for your patience!

Good news: On March 15, 2013, a New Jersey Early Childhood Conference will be held at St Paul's Christian Day School in New City (Rockland County) and on April 19, an Early Childhood Conference for New York will be held at Trinity Lutheran School in Hicksville.

Leif Ericson Day School Celebrates Thanksgiving on the Eve

On November 21, 2012, about 100 family and friends of Leif Ericson Day School, Brooklyn, NY, gathered to share lively conversation and a delicious meal of meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, and apple cider. For a \$5.00 donation plus one can of food, attendees also delighted in cake and coffee after supper.



At 7:00 p.m. 140 people gathered upstairs for worship, including members of LEDS Primary and Junior Choirs, joining in prayer, song, and scripture. Pastor David Rommereim, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and LEDS Board Chairperson, spoke of his

ever-growing list of things for which he is thankful, especially in light of the recent devastation in our city from Hurricane Sandy. After sharing in the Eucharist, we shouted, "Thanks be to God," as all traveled home.

It was a fitting celebration of thanks, as the LEDS community continues to serve those affected by the hurricane. Delivering about 100 bags of clothing and supplies, as well as prepared and non-perishable foods, and new children's pajamas, we are now collecting new, unwrapped toys for the children in Coney Island, and after our LDR dress-down day, we will send over \$1000.00 to Lutheran Disaster Relief. Four of our school families (Gerritsen Beach and the Rockaways) were directly affected by the storm, and we have taken in seven children displaced from their homes.



We continue to pray and serve, according to our mission.
Thanks be to God!

- Christine Hauge, Principal

Leif Ericson Day School
Building a Culture of Peace ~ One Day at a Time, One Student at a Time

LSA Member Schools and Early Childhood Centers

As of December 12, 2012

Astoria Lutheran School, Astoria (formerly Grace & QLS)
 Christ Lutheran School, Rosedale
 Christian Preschool, Dobbs Ferry
 Cross of Christ Preschool, Babylon
 Eltingville Lutheran School, Staten Island
 Emanuel Lutheran School, Patchogue
 Epiphany Lutheran School, Brooklyn
 Gloria Dei Nursery, New Hyde Park
 Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Plainview
 Grace Lutheran School, Malverne
 Holy Trinity Early Childhood Center, Rockville Centre
 Leif Ericson Day School, Brooklyn
 Little Saints Preschool of St Andrew's, West Hempstead
 Little Sprouts Preschool, New Hyde Park
 Long Island Lutheran Day School, East Northport
 Long Island Lutheran Middle & High School, Brookville
 Lutheran Elementary School of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn
 Martin Luther School, Maspeth
 Our Redeemer Nursery School, Seaford
 Our Saviour Lutheran Preschool, Jamaica
 Our Saviour Lutheran, Bronx
 Rainbow Christian Day School, Woodside
 Redeemer Lutheran Nursery School, Queens Village
 Redeemer Lutheran School, Glendale
 Resurrection Lutheran Preschool, Garden City

St David's Christian Preschool, Massapequa Park
 St James Lutheran Preschool, St James
 St John's Early Childhood Center, Merrick
 St John's Ev Lutheran School, Glendale
 St John's Ev Lutheran School, Staten Island
 St Luke's Nursery School, Woodhaven
 St Mark's Lutheran School, Yonkers
 St Paul's Child Care Center, Rye Brook
 St Paul's Christian Childhood Center, Saratoga Springs
 St Paul's Christian Day School, New City
 St Peter's Nursery Preschool, Huntington Station
 The Chapel School, Bronxville
 The Christian Nursery School, Wantagh
 The Life Day School, Old Westbury
 Trinity Lutheran School, Hicksville
 Trinity Preschool, New Hyde Park
 Zion Lutheran Nursery School, Westwood NJ

Associate Members

Elizabeth Hasbrouck, director, Bethlehem Early Learning Center, Ridgewood NJ
 Gail Hayman, director, Church of the Savior Nursery School, Paramus NJ
 Cynthia Keohane, principal, Trinity Lutheran School, Bogota NJ
 Donna Munsch, principal, Zion Lutheran, Westwood NJ

Gift Card Drive for SANDY Relief...

In late November, the Lutheran Schools Association launched a Gift Card Drive to assist 113 school families who were severely impacted by Superstorm Sandy. Many of these lost homes to fire or flooding and had to move in with relatives or friends while others suffered other devastating losses. Local Lutheran schools were asked for cash donations or \$50 gift cards to Target, VISA or American Express - and our request was shared with schools around the country, thanks to the ELEA and the LEA. In less than a month, LSA raised \$5,650.00 in cash and gift cards, including 40 cards donated by the Queens Chapter of *Thrivent Financial for Lutherans*. Two of our schools in southwest Brooklyn also provided school homes to a total of 19 displaced students from Breezy Point and the Rockaways. What a tremendous blessing Leif Ericson Day School and Lutheran Elementary School of Bay Ridge have been to these children and their families!

LSA: Facilitator ~ Advocate ~ Partner

- The Lutheran Schools Association **FACILITATES** conferences for administrators (directors and principals), early childhood teachers and assistants, professional development for teachers (K-12). LSA also provides regional meetings for administrators to encourage and support school leaders as they network and share the challenges and joys of Lutheran education in this time and area.
- We **ADVOCATE** at local, state and federal levels on behalf of Lutheran schools and early childhood centers about issues relating to education, government and Lutheran church bodies. LSA helps distribute title funds to schools meeting certain standards.
- By **PARTNERing** with other organizations and companies, LSA has arranged resources, discounted programs and opportunities to its members and sponsoring congregations.
- Find us on Facebook: LSA NY (Lutheran Schools Association) or Lutheran Schools Association Golf Outing.

Upcoming Activities...

January through March 2013 -

Lutheran Schools Month or Week to be celebrated. Chapel Offerings designated for the work of LSA, and preschools offer support through "Relay for LSA."

January 31, 2013 - Lutheran Schools Choir Festival sponsored by Concordia College-New York at Long Island Lutheran Middle & High School (Brookville)

February 2013 - Regional Professional Development workshops

March 15, 2013 - New Jersey Early Childhood Conference at St Paul's Christian Day School in New City (Rockland County)

April 19, 2013 - New York Early Childhood Conference at Trinity Lutheran School in Hicksville

May 15, 2013 - Annual Dinner and Recognition at Long Island Lutheran Middle & High School (Brookville)

May 2013 - Mets @ Citi Field for annual baseball fundraiser. Our thanks to Jim Dhyne for chairing this event.

August 2013 - Annual Golf Outing at North Shore Towers Country Club in Floral Park. We are also grateful to Mike Jakob for chairing this year's outing.

Try this QR Code...



Warren Castellani, Head of School at Lutheran School of Flushing and Bayside in Queens, was recently featured in the Atlantic District's Advent issue of "Engaged!" Here's how Lutheran schools are working to provide value and programs to their communities.



A New Way of Operating at LSF&B

This year the Lutheran School of Flushing and Bayside (LSF&B) enrolled 12 students in a new Gifted and Talented (G&T) kindergarten program. According to Head of School, Warren Castellani, it took over a year of research before he and his school board decided to move to the G&T model. First he and the board conducted demographic studies of their community and then they went out and talked to community members about what they wanted. They considered that while LSF&B may have seemed lost in the shuffle, it had always been geared towards providing more. Castellani and his board looked at other educational programs being offered in District 26 and thought about how LSF&B's program could be made to stand out within so healthy a district. As they went through the process of evaluation and thought of the alternatives that matched their mission of providing Christian Education, G&T stood out.

"The broadest and most comprehensive definition of G&T is *"Children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment,"* says Castellani. "It speaks of talent, which includes all areas of a child's life: academic, artistic, athletic, and social. In our search we were lucky enough to find an incredibly strong Christian kindergarten teacher (Ms. Grace Choi) with experience in teaching students to reach high levels of performance. She also speaks Korean as well as English, which is beneficial to many of our parents."

Most Lutheran Schools in NYC are struggling. LSF&B is no exception. When Castellani first arrived at the school his task was to create a viable Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and nursery program, create financial stability, and look into special programs to fit the needs of their parents. LSF&B's current short term goal is to monitor, assess, match to the common core standards and make revisions so that the newly opened program is meeting the expectations of parents and the community at large. Within the next four to five years, its goal is to become a K-8 Gifted & Talented School.

"Urban Christian schools can no longer remain stagnant in their planning, relying on past practices to lead to their future," says Castellani. "I believe that as schools begin to hear of success, like we all did when UPK appeared, it will encourage them to consider changing the way they operate and who in their communities they want to serve. Whether it is G&T, special education, infants/toddlers, International Baccalaureate, a school for just boys or just girls, a character development school focusing on Love, Grit and Zeal – will depend on the communities in which the parochial school is located and the talent of their staff."

PHOTO: Warren Castellani and Grace Choi with Gifted and Talented Students

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Making a Difference...

★ Want to help our 113 school families severely impacted by Superstorm Sandy?

Donate a \$50 gift card (Target, VISA, American Express) or cash (make check payable to **Lutheran Schools Association**) and mail to address below.

★ Pray for the work of Lutheran Schools Association, all our early childhood centers and schools, and the nearly 8,000 children who attend them - that we all offer a beacon of hope to the world.

★ Make a Christmas or end-of-year gift enabling LSA to strengthen its ministry to NYC-area schools. Or consider making a thank-offering for Christian education, perhaps in honor of a teacher or administrator from your past. Every gift is important! Please make checks payable to **LSA** and mail to address below.

★ Are you a member of *Thrivent Financial for Lutherans*? If so, please consider directing your **Thrivent Choice Dollars** to Lutheran Schools Association (under Other Lutheran Organizations). It is an easy way to help LSA and make a difference!

Lutheran Schools Association ~ 60-02 Maspeth Avenue ~ Maspeth NY 11378