

All School Activity Resources

An important part of celebrating Lutheran Schools Week is to involve as many people as you can in your celebration. This includes people from your school, congregation, and community. Lutheran Schools Week is a time for children, teachers and staff to share the excitement of learning and teaching in Lutheran Schools with all those they can effectively share the message of the Gospel with.

The following are some suggestions used in the past at schools and centers to help bring the good news of Lutheran Schools to all those around us. Some of the ideas you may have seen before and some may be new. Pick your favorites or add to the list some ideas of your own and *CELEBRATE!*

1. Spirit Week

This is a fun week for all of the children as they get to do and wear things that aren't normally seen as appropriate attire in school. A couple of cautions: 1. This works best when your teachers and staff are as involved as the children. We all need to show our school spirit and that includes the adults. 2. Remember to choose ideas that will not cause harm or put the children in any type of dangerous situations.

You will need to announce this week in advance so parents can be encouraged to work with their children to accomplish each of the days activities or dress ups.

SUGGESTIONS:

- a. Pajama Day or Slipper Day for the less adventurous
- b. School Color Day
- c. Crazy Hat
- d. Sports Team Day
- e. Backwards Day (That would be wear your clothes backwards - not walking)
- f. Teddy Bear Picnic Day
- g. Favorite Book Character Day
- h. Beach Day (no bikinis)
- i. International Day
- j. Mismatched Clothes Day
- k. Sunday Best Day (This is good for your Chapel Day)
- l. Stuffed Animal Day
- m. Designate a specific color to be worn each day of the week

2. Peace Week

Find a project related to peace for each day of the week such as:

- a. Write letters to organizations that advocate in the government for peace related issues.
- b. Create a peace wall in your school by using various art mediums to draw

picture of symbols and words of peace.

- c. Create a newspaper world of peace. Have plenty of new sections from the newspapers in your work area. Have the children cut out articles that have to do with peace or that have to do with people in need in the world. Use these articles to make a giant PEACE FOR THE WORLD – WHEN WILL IT COME?

Mural.

- d. Create a wall of people by covering various sized boxes with pictures of people from around the world.
Be sure to have pictures of many cultures. When finished stack the boxes to create you wall.
- e. Speak with local merchants about placing posters in their businesses or even painting posters on their windows to promote peace. Be sure to have samples of what you would be painting and let them know you will be back to clean up.

3. Musical Productions

Many schools do a yearly musical production, play or choir concert. Lutheran Schools Week is an excellent time to show what your students can accomplish in drama and music. Don't forget to invite your congregation and community as well as parents and friends of your school or center. There are many school plays that deal with peace issues. Don't forget that children getting along is also a facet of peace.

4. All Family Peace Pole Project

The purpose of this activity is to remind our families or classes that they are the peacemakers now and in the future. It is a visual reminder that it is our responsibility to bring and keep peace in God's world. This project can be done with carpet roles or if you want them in the ground outside old phone poles work well. Find and secure your poles and paint them white or cover them with white paper. Find designs that symbolize peace. This also includes words and drawings relating to peace. This is a great activity for the children and their families to work on. It is a group project so is requires cooperation skills to make the project work smooth.

5. Very Important Reader Day

Prior to Lutheran Schools Week be in touch with community and congregational leaders to come to school for a short period of time and read to a class of children. This is usually only a 10 - 20 minute time frame depending on the class of children. The teacher, especially in the upper levels, will need to be ready to provide suggestions of reading materials to your Very Important Readers. Some people to consider might be the fire chief, chief of police, mayor, pastor, librarian, principal of the local public school, members of the town council, the school secretary or custodian, congregational council members, school or center committee members, parents, a high schools sports figure, business executives from the area, the manager of a McDonalds, upper grade children from the

school, and the list goes on. Be creative in your asking. You might just be amazed at how many people accept your generous offer and how many people leave having a new respect for your ministry and your school. Recommend that they bring a book related to peace or diversity issues.

6. Very Important Person Day

As many children no longer live near family or relations you may consider a Very Important Person's Day during your Lutheran Schools Week celebration. This leaves no child out as they can bring a person who is important to them. It could be a mom, dad, grandparent, neighbor, member of the congregation, aunt, cousin, or a friend who is important to them. Teachers and staff should also be encouraged to invite a Very Important Person to visit with them as well.

A typical idea might include:

- a. an invitation for all to attend the morning chapel service (it is always best to inform the pastor their will be a number of guests present)
- b. after chapel there will be time to visit the classrooms
There should be enough time here for a story, finish a story. craft, sing-a-long, or anything else that a creative teacher might come up with to show their guests what the class enjoys. As Lutheran Schools Week falls the first full week of March you might use Lenten ideas or St. Patrick's Day ideas during this time.
- c. end the morning with a luncheon for all of your VIP's and their hosts.

7. Teacher for a Lesson

Our communities and congregations are full of people who have something they can teach our children. Contact members of the congregation who quilt to work with older grades on making quilt squares, the local fire department for a fire safety lesson, the police department for a lesson on stranger danger, the Red Cross for a lesson in basic survival or first aid, cooking lessons from a local chef, library programs, nurses and doctors, high school teachers, and dance instructors. Here again the list can go on for a very long time. Take a serious look at your community and invite people into your school to teach a lesson. It doesn't have to be long just shared. You have reached out to those you share a ministry with in your congregation and to those you share a community with and given them a first hand look at your school and students.

Be sure to contact these people well in advance, ask them what they can offer to your students, sit back and enjoy the opportunity share your school or center.

8. Teacher Switch Day

We all need a little variety in our lives, so why not in our teaching as well. Try this...

- a. Put all of the classes at your school in a hat and let each teacher (and the principal) pick their class for the day.

- b. You will need to decide on whether this will be a full day, morning or afternoon and the lesson plans should reflect this time frame. The regular classroom teacher then provides lessons and a schedule for teaching the plans.
- c. The “new” teacher then takes over their “new” class. Of course they could also become a principal for the time agreed on. This also tends to give all of the teachers new respect for the classes and lessons their colleagues teach each day.

9. The Principal’s Challenge

This one is up to the principal of the school or director of the center to decide on. They may want to make their challenge in the week before Lutheran Schools Week to get the student and staff excited about it and ready to make it happen.

The principal decides on a challenge such as if each student reads 2 books (this will need to be set according to grade levels) or if we collect 500 Campbell’s Soup labels by Thursday of Lutheran Schools Week I will wear a clown suit to school all day on Friday. Be sure to set attainable goals for the children or they won’t get excited and they won’t be challenged. With our theme of Linking Hearts and Hands for Peace you may want to consider a challenge to bring food for the local food pantry, books and audio tapes for a women’s prison ministry so they can tape their reading of the story for their children to hear while they are in jail, or socks for a local children’s shelter. Be creative there are a lot of opportunities out there for service.

A WARNING...

Be careful of what you set as their reward. Remember you have to really be willing to accomplish the task you set for yourself. A school leader once had to kiss a pig and another had to sit on the roof all day and work because the children rose to the occasion and met their challenge.

10. Don’t Forget Your Neighbors

We sometimes are so busy in our daily school lives that we forget our schools are a part of a neighborhood. Even though we are private schools we still serve the community with our ministries. Following are some suggestions for letting your neighbors know that you are a part of their neighborhood and that you care.

- a. Tie a ribbon around a fun sized bag of M & M’s and attach a message that reads:

Many and Marvelous are the things that we do at (your school’s name) Lutheran School. We share these few with you. Make a short list of some of the outreach things that your school does such as collections for a food pantry, science fairs, musical production, special programs, chapel services, and anything else that would tell your neighbors who you are.
- b. Children are great at making tissue paper flowers. They can attach simple notes letting their neighbors know that they like sharing a neighborhood with

them.

- c. Create a newspaper that features poems or stories written by your students. Share in this newspaper stories about accomplishments at your school, special happenings from various classrooms, and things that your neighbors might be able to participate in during Lutheran Schools Week. Have the older children with a parent or congregational helper distribute the newspapers in the neighborhood at the beginning of Lutheran Schools Week.
- d. Door Knob Hangers are a great way to involve students and families in outreach to the neighborhoods. Blank door knob hangers are now available at most office supply stores. When you have created a design and text they can be run through your plain paper copier. Your students can add the color. This is something that families or the children with parent or congregational helpers can distribute in their neighborhoods. Be sure to check local laws before you do this one to make sure it is legal in your community to leave this type of message on doors.

11. Recognitions

This is a special time to remember all those who make your school the very special learning and growing place that it is. Be sure to ask each teacher for a list of those people who have volunteered their time and talents to enhance the children's learning in each of your classrooms. Other people that you would want to include would be your teachers, all staff, pastors, principal, cafeteria people, parents, board or committee members and anyone who helped in any way during the year. Don't forget speakers and people from outside of your school who may have donated things or helped out at the school.

This can be as simple as a certificate or as involved as a dinner in their honor during Lutheran Schools Week. It doesn't matter what form the honors take we just need to say thank you more often to all of those who do so much for our schools.

Congregational members as a whole are often forgotten for their support of the school ministry. They need to be recognized as supportive members of your school ministry program. A certificate of appreciation can be handed out during the service or as people are leaving the church. You might also include a certificate and a letter from the principal in your monthly newsletter. We need to remember the whole congregation when saying thank you.

12. Neighborhood March

Have each of your classes make banners and school signs and then participate in a silent neighborhood march. Some of the children can carry school book marks or something else that has the schools name on it to hand out. Share them with those neighbors who might happen to be outside. You may want to

include peace in God's world signs and picture of what peace means to the children carrying them.

13. Open Houses

- a. Do an evening Open House during Lutheran Schools Week to promote your school in the community. Share with those who attend what your school is doing with the children and families that currently part of your school community. This might also serve as a time for registration for next year or an opportunity for perspective families to talk with families that attend your school already.
- b. Encourage your teachers to set up a Welcome To Our Class Open House. This is an open house where the community, families, and the congregation are invited to visit the classrooms and see what the children are doing in their classrooms. The key here is to make sure you have a fun lesson that day and to set a limit on the times classrooms are open to the public to observe.

14. Art Show or Science Fair

These are also excellent ways to show what your school is accomplishing with your students in specific areas of education. This is another way to invite people from the community to visit your school or center.

Your art show might be centered around the theme of Follow Jesus In The World.

15. Invention Convention

This is a real family fun time Lutheran Schools Week activity. It requires that the teacher collect trash. Yes that's correct collect trash such as clean milk bottles, 2 liter pop bottles, toothpaste tube caps, scraps of wood, various size boxes from cereal, granola bars, etc., baby food jars, paper towel tubes, and just about any kind of trash will work here.

When you have enough trash for your whole class divide it up into enough bags so that each student will have his very own family bag of trash. Send it home with these directions:

Your family has been selected to be _____ Lutheran School inventors. Please empty your sack, take a look at all of the great trash before you and think. Think of something useful that could be invented using your trash. When you have an idea begin building your invention. When your family is finished, give it a name and write a description of the invention.

We will meet on (date, time and place) to share our inventions with one other.

16. Family Talent Show

Well this one probably doesn't need an explanation except to say that you teachers, staff, pastors, and congregation are all part of the Lutheran School's

family.

17. Special Giving

This is an excellent week to develop a special gifts program for your school. The more creative you can make this the more attractive it is for parents to contribute to the program. Look at using your offering to support ELCA ministries in countries that are suffering from war, draught and poverty.

One great idea was to fill the bird houses with dollars for education. Trees were loaned to the school by a local florist. Birdhouses were hung in the trees and they were placed in both the school and church. The reason for the birdhouses were placed in the school newspaper, the church newsletter and bulletin, and in special flyers sent home with the children.

One our of Early Childhood Education Centers created "Peace Quilts" which they sold at an end of the year school get together and raised over a \$1,000. They sent the money as their offering to help children in Lutheran schools in Palestine.

18. Invite - Invite - Invite

When you are making your list of people to invite to special programs at your school don't forget to include the following people as appropriate:

The Bishop of your Synod

Your Synodical Staff

The Pastors of other churches in your community - especially those we are in full communion with.

19. Earth News Bulletin Board

Use on bulletin board at the school or church as an earth news board. Place a globe with the words Earth News under it. You might also use the captions Extra! Extra!...Read all about it! Under the caption encourage children and parents or members of the congregation to bring in short newspaper articles or editorials that express their opinions. These should relate to our use of the environment.

The board can be visited and the articles discussed in light of the class protecting God's creation.

20. Letter Writing Resource Area

Set an area inside the school door or the school office where parents, student, friends and members of the congregation can come to write letters to various organizations or congress about the environment and how it needs to be protected. Provide writing paper, envelope, pens, pencils, crayons, markers, stamps, addresses of congressional representatives and environmental agencies. Provide a basket for finished letters and make sure that they are sent out each day.

21. We Are All Friends Of Jesus

This is a family or congregation graffiti wall. It is a way of letting everyone involved with your school express how they are friends of Jesus. Use long sheets of butcher paper or newsprint and draw a picture of Christ in the center using a transparency. This should be hung where people entering your school or church can add handprints, messages, pictures or anything that tells people how they feel about being a friend of Jesus.