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PARTNERS

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Conduits for Christ

By: Joel A. Nelson, CYD Administrator

A Sunday school teacher is...
A MIND through which Christ THINKS.
A VOICE though which Christ SPEAKS.
A HEART through which Christ LOVES.
A HAND through which Christ HELPS.

The words above, adapted from Uncle Ben's Quotebook (1980), are a fitting reminder of what you are, dear Sunday school teacher. This Sunday school year, you have been a "conduit for Christ" if you will. Your mind, voice, heart, and hands have been used by the Holy Spirit to pass on Jesus to the students you have taught and their families. And for that I want to say, THANKS! Thanks so very much for all you have done this year in your congregation and Sunday school.

According to the Commission on Youth Discipleship database, 1105 congregations (89%) of the 1239 congregations in the WELS have a Sunday school program. These 1105 Sunday schools are staffed by about 5,000 teachers (We're not sure of the exact number because all congregations do not

report their staff numbers to us.). If each teacher presents an hour lesson for each Sunday over a 36 week period, that's 180,000 hours. If each teacher spends 3-4 hours in lesson preparation each week, we're looking at 540,000-720,000 man and woman hours in lesson preparation. Lesson preparation plus lesson presentation adds up to 720,000-900,000 hours WELS-wide in one year. That's an amazing amount of volunteer effort! In fact, if you divide these numbers by the number of hours in one year (8760) you get 82.2-102.7 years of time spent on Sunday school lessons within one year of actual time!

Sure, the numbers can be crunched in a pretty impressive display, but that's obviously not the big point. The big point is that so many caring, competent, and committed people like you are involved in the Christian education of God's dear children. The big point is that you are willing to be a "conduit for Christ," sharing him through your thoughts, words, attitudes, and actions.

THANKS again for what you have done this year, and praise God that he gives us the privilege to do it!



Teaching Tip!

When sending memory work home with my prek-K students, I attach the printed verse to a related die-cut shape which I make at the local scrapbook supply store.

For example: I printed Romans 10:17 “Faith comes from hearing the message” on an open book shape and wrote the words “Holy Bible” on the back. 1 Timothy 2:3,4 “God our Savior . . . wants all men to be saved.” Was printed on a fish shape and attached to a bag of goldfish crackers. My favorite, however, was for Matthew 18:20 “Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them,” I took a photo of the entire class the week before the lesson, then had copies made for each student. I attached the photos to pieces of cardstock, printed the verse below and laminated it.

The parents have given a lot of positive feedback saying they like it because they know what to work on with their children and the kids enjoy the fun shapes and the positive feedback from their parents (and me) when saying the verses.

— Submitted by
Charlene M. Deisting,
Redeemer, Maple Grove, MN

Please share YOUR Teaching Tip

We're continually looking for that great idea you've tried in your Sunday school classroom. You will notice that this is the 2nd issue that has featured teaching tips from you, our readers. If you have a teaching tip, and you all do, send to us so that we can share it others. Mail it to us at the CYD office address (WELS-CYD, 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398) or e-mail it to: CYD@sab.wels.net. Thanks!

From the Field

At Faith in Excelsior, Minnesota, Sunday school has always been an integral part of our Sunday worship. Twice a year, the students in the Sunday school classes provide the message for worship – once at Christmas, and again at a closing service in May. The year-end service in May is our way to recognize the children for their efforts in Sunday school during the previous school year. In place of a sermon on that Sunday, the children provide recitation and songs recounting the lessons they learned during the last year.

Last year, when the *Christ-Light*® curriculum that we used covered the New Testament stories through Ascension, we used the theme “Fishers of Men” for our year-end service. The children dressed in shorts or jeans, t-shirts, and fishing vests and caps. We made big, colorful paper-plate “fish” that were hung on poles and in nets. And the message they delivered encouraged us all to be “Fishers of Men.”

In the past, we have written these brief (15-20 minute) services ourselves. Unlike the materials that can be purchased for the Christmas Service, it has been difficult to find prepared programs that are short enough and are meant for children of all ages. Our service from last year is available. We hope that others may have similar programs that they would be willing to share. Perhaps CYD would be willing to post these programs online in a resource area to facilitate this and encourage churches to include a year-end service as part of their Sunday school program. At Faith, it is an important part of celebrating our Sunday school!

— Submitted by Marcia Michalik, Faith, Excelsior, MN

Editor's note: Marcia's service is available by contacting either the CYD at mateskeb@sab.wels.net, or Marcia at mdmichalik@visi.com.

Conference Videos

Videos Available

The keynote address at the 2001 and 2002 Sunday School Teachers' Conference in Wisconsin Dells is available on video. If interested, you may order them from the CYD office (414-256-3274). The cost is \$ 10.95 plus shipping/handling.



2001 Conference

“You Will Shine Like the Stars” given by Prof. Richard Gurgel of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, WI.

2002 Conference

“Show What You Know” given by Rev. David Kolander of Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, Brookfield, WI.



“...and teaching them to obey everything”

“...and teaching them to obey everything” was the theme of this year’s Sunday School Conferences held in Wisconsin Dells, WI, on Saturday, January 19th and in Bloomington, MN, on Saturday, February 23rd. Over 275 people attended both conferences!



“I enjoyed this very much. God bless all who worked so hard to put it together.”



“Awesome conference! Really done well!”

“Gave a renewed joy for teaching.”



“It was a day well spent!”



“I really appreciated the format of the workshop time for spiritual growth, sharing and fellowship.”



“I just wanted to write you to say thanks for a wonderful Sunday school teachers workshop. I absolutely loved it!!! I have learned so much, and I plan to share that information with the rest of my congregation. This workshop has given me a new zeal to do the work of the Lord. All of you did a terrific job! Thanks!!!”



“Lots of good discussion led to lots of great questions.”



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New CYD Administrator



Perhaps by now you have heard that the WELS Commission on Youth Discipleship (CYD) has called a new Administrator and that the call has been accepted. The new CYD Administrator is Mr. Joel Nelson.

Joel is a 1978 graduate of (Dr.) Martin Luther College and has served the WELS as a school principal and upper grades teacher at St. Andrew Lutheran School-Chicago, Illinois (1978-83), as principal and teacher of all 8 grades at Our Redeemer Lutheran School-Santa Barbara, CA (1983-90), as Youth and Family Minister at St. Paul's Lutheran Church-Muskego, WI (1990-99), and as Associate Administrator for the WELS Commission on Parish Schools, CPS (1999-2002). He has a Masters degree in Family Studies and is currently in a Doctoral program in Leadership, Learning, and Service.

Joel and his wife, Carol, have been married 23 years and have three children: Natalie 18, Eric 16, and Lindsay 10. The Nelsons live in Muskego, WI and are members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church there.

A Few Notes ...

2003 Wisconsin Dells Sunday School Conference

Mark your calendars! The Wisconsin Dells Sunday School Conference is scheduled for Saturday, January 18th, 2003. It will again be held at Howard Johnson's Antiqua Bay Resort. Our goal is to get the registration materials in your hands by December 1st. If you would like to receive an individual mailing, please send your request to: mateskeb@sab.wels.net or WELS - CYD, 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398; our fax number is 414-256-3899 or phone us at 414-256-3274. We are here to serve you.

Just a reminder!

The Special Ministries In Lutheran Education (SMILE) Conference is being held in Bloomington, MN, June 28-30, 2002. Registration information is being sent out. For more information, contact Michelle Voss at 877-505-3675 or by e-mail at voss@wlim-jsm.wels.net

Help us to help you!

Just a reminder - keep the CYD office notified when your Sunday school teachers and superintendents change. Mail those changes to us at the CYD office address (WELS-CYD, 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398) or e-mail it to: CYD@sab.wels.net, or fax it to us at 414-256-3899. Thanks!

Please contact us with any questions or for further information.

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