

Celebrating ***the Missions and Ministries*** ***of Our Saviour's*** ***Lutheran Church***



This month's highlight:

Children's Ministry

My Journey to Becoming a Preschool Sunday School Teacher

by Wendy Wennerberg

Last year when I was asked to fill in every other week teaching 4 year old children, I was completely overwhelmed with my life. I was exhausted physically and mentally and recovering from postpartum depression after the birth of my second daughter. It was one of the toughest year's of my life. In theory, the last thing I needed was another morsel added to my already full plate. At the time, it was seemingly impossible to think of anything other than what was happening within the four walls of my house. My family questioned my reasoning and decision to teach and doubted my ability to add teaching to my week. Now that I look back it wasn't an enormous time commitment, it was very minimal. But when you are suffering with depression every little deviation or fork in your daily activity can feel like 400 more pounds have been added to your back.

So the question was, why did I feel like I had to do this? Why, at this terrible time did I believe that in my heart this was right? I didn't have that answer. I just knew I could do it and that I should.

So I jumped in. Head first, without really knowing how to dive. And what I was reminded of was that children, 3 and 4 year olds especially, are so full of wonder. The Bible gives us so many wonder-filled stories and lessons that they understand whole heartedly. They don't question, they just soak it all in. At this moment in their little lives they believe, they aren't skeptics. They want to hear about Jesus calming the storm. They understand that Jesus healed the ten men and that once in this earth's long history there was no light. For them, just closing their eyes and being very quiet brings them to that time. And then on the first day God created light and the children open their eyes wide and with awe. They get it.

These children and the Gospel is what I needed...I needed to stop being a skeptic. I needed to stop being skeptical of my abilities as a mother, as a friend, a wife and a daughter. Helping the children understand the Gospel brought me to this. Their awe and understanding of the lessons renewed me and continues to do so and they together with the Gospel have renewed my faith in God and in myself. His lessons invigorate me and my creative energy and leaves me wanting to do more. More lesson planning, more time setting up the classroom, more time singing with the children, more time teaching about God and his creative abilities, more time wearing a beard and climbing Mt. Sinai to talk with God about The Ten Commandments, more time feeling total wonderment. I want more time without my own questioning and holding tight to the belief in what God has given me and a hopeful interest in what's to come. Now it is clear why I knew this was right for me. It has taken a year to realize it: but the children, the Gospel, and our Sunday School have brought me to it. It is a whole hearted understanding, awe-filled and wide eyed belief in God's love for me and all of us. I get it.

Opportunities in Children's Ministry at OSLC

Rotational Sunday School – Teach or shepherd children. Teachers volunteer for a three week unit and choose an area they would like to lead – Art; Science; Drama; Movie; Bible Games; or Living Out the Lesson. All materials are provided. Shepherds walk with children from class to class twice a month for a whole year, providing a loving, consistent connection with the students.

Sunday School Music Leader – Teach children songs, simple hymns and prayers in a fun setting at each Sunday School session. Some classes gather to begin with music for a period of 20 minutes at 9:00 or 10:30 am.

Awesome Choir Experience – (ACE) Children and youth, (grades K-5) meet for rehearsal, with optional dinner on Wednesday evenings September through April. Rejoice! is the choir for Grades K-2; King's Carolers is the choir for 3rd through 5th graders. Kitchen Helpers help prepare a meal and assist with cleanup following dinner. Shoppers shop weekly for groceries for the meals. Table Adults sit with a group of children at dinner, facilitate a brief activity or discussion with the children.

First Communion – Helpers are needed to coordinate the training and hospitality events that culminate in first communion for 3rd graders. This commitment is during the spring.

Kids' Night Out – Help with a craft or activity for this monthly Friday night fellowship event for K-5th graders.

Moms' Club of OSLC – Participate in fellowship events with other parents and young children. Contact group coordinator: Erin Walsh, 847-398-7096 for more information or to join the group.

Special Event Helper (Carnival, Advent, Lent, etc.) – Participate and/or coordinate a children's event over a short time frame. Many different kinds of skills are needed.

Vacation Bible School takes place for a week the end of each June. Volunteers to be Teachers, Craft Leaders, Music Leaders, Nursery Helpers, Recreation Leaders, Snack Center Leaders are needed.

Sports Life Camp - Volunteer leaders from our church, will assist the SportsLife Camp coaches in leading the campers in all planned activities.

Quiet Bags – Coordinate and update weekly the material that is provided in the bags children take into worship.

To learn more about (or to get involved in) Children's Ministry contact Cari Ann Petersen, Children's Ministry Coordinator, 847-255-8700 ext. 243 or email: cpetersen@oursaviours.org

Over the years, the people of Our Saviour's have supported

Children's Ministries

through the annual budget (including staff leader salaries) as follows:

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009* |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| \$31,438 | \$31,949 | \$31,038 | \$32,273 | \$31,834 |
| 2.12% of budget | 2.06% of budget | 1.94% of budget | 1.97% of budget | 1.85% of budget *proposed |