

# LASE

Spring 2022

# connections



## God's Light Continues to Shine Bright Through the Children of LASE

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine ... In direct contrast to the darkness of our circumstances this school year, the ministry of LASE Specialized Education continues to focus their beacon of hope on God's work for His children. It's amazing how great things happen for those who don't stop believing, trying, learning, and showing gratitude for God's blessings.

### GOOD NEWS FROM LASE FACULTY!

What a blessing it has been to be able to once again provide "in person" speech and language services to our LASE students during the 2021/22 school year! However, COVID restrictions do create challenges for one-on-one interaction with our students. Distancing, wearing masks and/or face shields provide safety precautions, but can impede speech therapy by muffling sounds and distorting mouth/tongue movements. We feel God's grace daily, as we face the challenges by continuing to pivot to insure that the growing number of students with speech and language challenges will continue to have the opportunity to hear and spread the message of Jesus. *Contributed by Dawn Praechter, M.S., CCC-SLP & Karen Abeln, M.A., CCC-SLP, LASE Speech-Language Pathologists*



Karen Abeln, LASE Speech Pathologist, and LASE student

National Lutheran Schools week was celebrated at **Immanuel Lutheran School in St. Charles** with a student led project featuring the door design theme, "Christ is In All of Our Hearts". Each LASE student designed a unique heart depicting where they see Christ in their lives or how they show Christ is in their hearts each day. The students struck their "happy pose" depicting the strength of their love for Jesus!! *Contributed by Kelley Malady, LASE Education Specialist*



Project and celebratory students from Immanuel Lutheran School in St. Charles

Students from **St. John's Lutheran School in Arnold, Missouri**, joined in celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week January 24-28. LASE students worked on the writing portion of the project with their resource teacher, Mara Springer, to create thank you notes to first responders in the community. Donuts were delivered along with smiles celebrating their service. *Contributed by Mara Springer, LASE Education Specialist*



Students from St. John's Lutheran School, Arnold say thank you!

## What could be seen as a setback might be one of God's most phenomenal set ups!



“Our family was broken, struggling for answers, afraid to make any changes that might make Emme’s learning struggles even harder”, said mom, Melanie Acker. Prayers led them to visit Zion Lutheran School in St. Peters, where they met with Principal, Marc Debrick, and LASE Education Specialist, Chris Tomlinson. The Acker family left Zion feeling that “*this was a place where God was glorified, and every child’s potential mattered.*” Emme’s reading and language challenges were evaluated and she began third grade utilizing strategies and resource accommodations for dyslexia. Her determination, work ethic and faith in Jesus over the years have impressed her teachers and fellow students. Emme calls Mrs. Tomlinson her “school mom”, and enjoys “paying it forward” to support others who struggle, by leaving little note of encouragement for them on the classroom board.

Emme graduates this year, confident in her reading and spelling, and looking forward to making new friends at Lutheran High School-St. Charles. As Zion general education teacher, Mrs. Crenshaw says, “God continues to use Emme to bless His Kingdom.”

Mom, Melanie, LASE Student Ambassador, Emme and LASE Education Specialist, Chris Tomlinson

# WELCOME

We are pleased to open a new chapter at LASE as we welcome **Board Chair, Diana Meers**. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the ministry. She was Principal of Immanuel Lutheran School, St. Charles, for nine years and has sat on the LASE board for a decade. “I’ve been involved in many family meetings for children with specialized learning needs. There is such value to Lutheran schools in having the opportunity to offer LASE services to embrace students not normally served. It enhanced the ministry of **Immanuel Lutheran School, St. Charles**, and the collaboration empowered our general education teachers with additional insight and resources.” We look forward to your leadership and vision, Diana!



LASE Board Members, from left, Sue Torbeck, Michele Berra and Diana Meers, showing their support for Herald the Holidays

### GRANT SUPPORT

THANK YOU to the following LASE Supporters:

- ▶ Cardinals Care
- ▶ Employees Community Fund of Boeing
- ▶ Wayne C. Kaufmann Foundation
- ▶ Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
- ▶ St. Louis Christmas Carols Association

## Let's Hear It For Our LASE Educators!



*"During my experience at **Grace Chapel**, I have found that connections and communication are essential to making sure that my students, parents, and general education teachers have the "village" of support that they need. Special School District (the public school district known as SSD in the St. Louis County area) is a big part of our connections, providing after school services to our students when needed. When a school budget does not allow for full time specialized education support, LASE Educational Consultants have found that partnering with outside agencies provides additional strategies and instruction to meet all the needs of their students. LASE is that connecting piece at Grace Chapel, advocating and uniting the village, so that every child is served."*

Sharon Schmidtke, LASE Education Specialist,  
Grace Chapel Lutheran School



## Ministry between LASE and Salem Lutheran School-Blackjack



"I found my ministry through my LASE service to these unforgettable students and teachers of the **Salem Lutheran School-Blackjack** community!" says **Mariah Spanglet, LASE Education Specialist. Principal, Jeff Burkee**, considers Salem to be "the gem of North County", with the offering of caring, individualized learning within a Christian environment. LASE has maintained a longtime partnership with the school, but Jeff realized the growing need and found a way to increase service hours to accommodate more students. Mariah provides crucial, hands-on early intervention to uncover the core of behavior-based challenges. She then

follows up with LASE-led teamwork between students, parents and general ed teachers to implement strategies to help these children be successful students and friends. She has implemented social skills classes, emphasizing appropriate classroom behavior, the use of manners, and understanding and managing emotions.

Mariah models respect, compassion and concern for each student, encouraging their uniqueness, while reassuring them that they are an important part of the whole Salem community/family.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Monday, June 27, 2022**

**LASE 39th Annual  
Golf Benefit**

Sunset Country Club

**August 2022**

**LASE Insight Series  
Workshops**

**November 5, 2022**

**26th Annual Herald the  
Holidays Celebration**

Doubletree Hotel St. Louis  
Westport

For information or registration for events,  
visit [luthranspecialied.org/Events](http://luthranspecialied.org/Events)  
or call 314-268-1234.



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Thank you, NLSA Visiting Team!

### NLSA ACCREDITATION

During February, 2022, LASE hosted a visiting team for their NLSA self-study, to maintain accreditation compliance with national standards for Lutheran schools. Approval ratings are based upon evidence and practices that are currently in place at LASE partner schools. We welcome this opportunity to identify and celebrate our unique strengths, while we remain proactive in implementing enhancements that will continue to impact the lives of the students we serve.

### 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - HERALD THE HOLIDAYS

More than 200 guests joined together virtually to celebrate 25 years of **Herald the Holidays** and it's many families and friends. They enjoyed the LASE program, bid on silent auction items, purchased boutique items and shopped fashions from Chico's - West County. Thanks to you, over \$53,000 was raised to directly impact the lives of LASE students. Let's rekindle the treasured tradition of kicking off our holiday season by joining together for Herald the Holidays on Saturday, November 5, 2022 at the Doubletree Hilton - Westport!



LASE Models - Chico's West County



Tournament Partner, Todd Keske, Foam Supplies, Inc. and foursome

### TEE IT UP FOR THE KIDS

LASE, in partnership with **Foam Supplies, Inc.**, is gearing up for their **39th Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, June 27, at Sunset Country Club**. We can't wait to gather sponsors, donors, volunteers and golfers for this historic tournament to once again *"Tee it up for the Kids of LASE!"*