



in all
things

National Lutheran
Schools Week

Colossians 1:15-20



contents

contents	2
welcome letter	3
presidential proclamation	4
introduction	5
worship & devotions	
hymn	6
sunday or celebration service	7
chapel talk: IN ALL THINGS	9
monday: CHRIST	10
tuesday: CREATION	12
wednesday: CHILDREN	14
thursday: CHURCH	16
friday: COMMUNITY	18
resources	
poster sample	20
bulletin insert sample	21
graphic samples	22
additional resources	23

welcome letter

Dear Friends in Christ,

It's here! National Lutheran Schools Week (NLSW) is the opportunity to celebrate with 1,885 schools nationwide and to give thanks for the gift of Lutheran schools to students, families and communities. Churches and schools rejoice in a partnership in and a shared vision for proclaiming God's grace and mercy to equip the next generation of faithful Christian servants. They give thanks to God for the opportunity to touch the lives of thousands and thousands of children who attend Lutheran early childhood centers, elementary schools and high schools.

The NLSW theme this year is "In All Things" and is inspired by Colossians 1:17-20: "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church ... [He reconciles] to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." This timeless theme empowers Lutheran schools to praise and share Christ in the sanctuary, classroom, STEM lab, choir room, playground, gym, athletic field, faculty lounge, office and every place where God's children and their leaders gather.

While "In All Things" is the theme and goal for this special week, its emphasis is appropriate for every day of the school year. In praise and thanksgiving to God, teachers and students strive to do their best, seeking to do all things well, and when they fall short they are blessed to be able to seek the grace of God for forgiveness and then rededicate their efforts individually, and as a school, to glorify God and serve His people.

Teachers and students look forward to NLSW every year. In the mix of spirit days, special guests, service-learning experiences, open houses, community projects and the many other creative ways NLSW is celebrated, all can rejoice in the Gospel promise of eternal life, living in Christ's victory and proclaiming the Good News to one another and the world.

In His service and yours,

Dr. Rebecca Schmidt

DIRECTOR, LCMS SCHOOL MINISTRY

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



presidential proclamation

Whereas, God loves us and sent His Son to be our peace through His death and resurrection; and

Whereas, Jesus Christ is “before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:17-18); and

Whereas, “He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18); and

Whereas, Lutheran schools teach children the wonders of the creation; and

Whereas, “By him all things were created” (Col. 1:16); and

Whereas, Lutheran schools teach the Word of God, especially the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

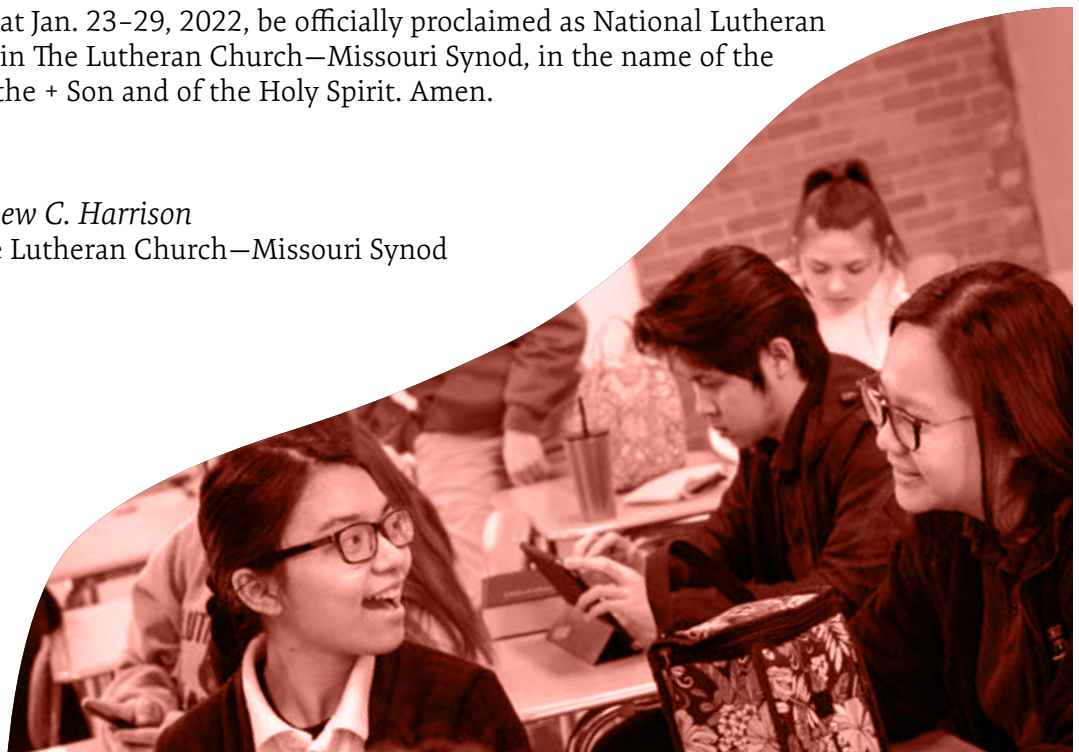
Whereas, Through Jesus, God reconciled “to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20); and

Whereas, In all things, Christ is the focus of Lutheran schools; and

Whereas, During National Lutheran Schools Week, we rejoice that by God’s grace Christ is “in all things”; therefore be it

Resolved, That Jan. 23-29, 2022, be officially proclaimed as National Lutheran Schools Week in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
PRESIDENT, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



introduction

“He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. ... [He reconciles] to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross” (COL. 1:17–20).

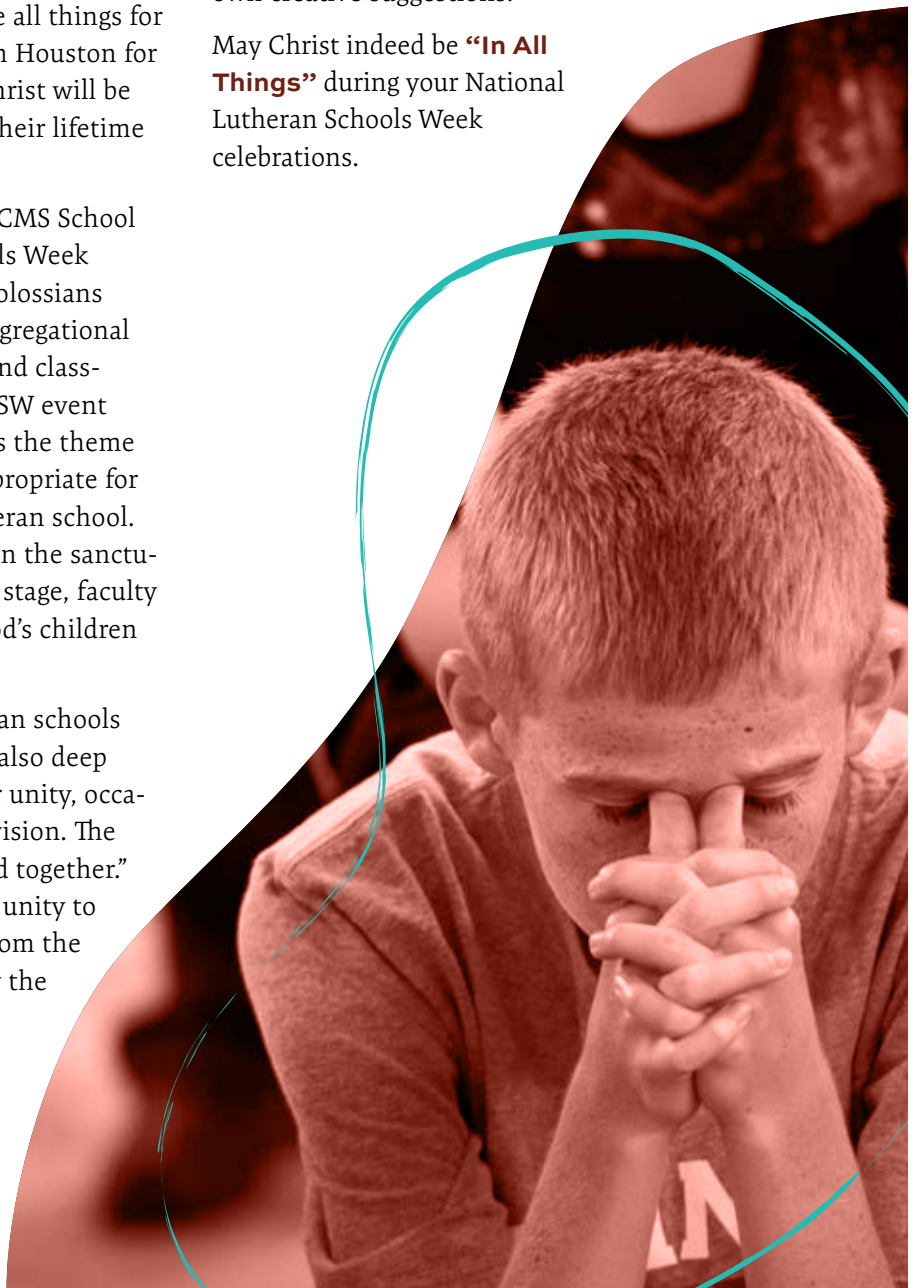
Christ was all things to the Apostle Paul, and Paul shares his confession and prayer with the church at Colossae. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has chosen the inspired words of Paul (COL. 1:15–20) as the theme for the 2022 LCMS Youth Gathering. The prayer is that Christ will be all things for the tens of thousands of youth gathered in Houston for a few days, and, more importantly, that Christ will be all things for the youth of the church for their lifetime and into eternity.

“In All Things” is also a fitting theme for LCMS School Ministry and for National Lutheran Schools Week (NLSW). This NLSW resource brings the Colossians text and its emphasis on Christ to the congregational celebration, school chapel worship, staff and classroom devotional times, and into every NLSW event and activity. While Christ “In All Things” is the theme and goal for the week, the emphasis is appropriate for every school year and every day in a Lutheran school. Lutheran schools praise and share Christ in the sanctuary, classroom, playground, athletic court, stage, faculty lounge, office and in every place where God’s children and their leaders gather.

During the course of a school year, Lutheran schools experience times of great celebration and also deep sadness. While Lutheran schools strive for unity, occasionally there are times of conflict and division. The Apostle Paul writes, “in him all things hold together.” “In All Things” seeks to bring purpose and unity to the school. Christ “In All Things” moves from the context of the temporal to the eternal, “by the blood of his cross.”

The “In All Things” theme is developed in five daily emphases: Christ, children, church, creation and community. While the themes are assigned to particular days, each church and school can certainly rearrange the themes to fit their celebration preferences and activities. The “More Things” section of each daily emphasis provides some supplemental classroom, school, family and church activities to further the exploration and celebration. Individual schools are encouraged to expand on these with their own creative suggestions.

May Christ indeed be **“In All Things”** during your National Lutheran Schools Week celebrations.



hymn

In All Things Jesus Christ Is Found

BY DR. JEFFREY E. BURKART

Based on Colossians 1:15-20 and the 2021-2022 National Lutheran Schools Week Theme: "In All Things"
Sung to WAS GOTT TUD ("What God Ordains Is Always Good" – LSB 760). Tune: Public domain.

In all things Jesus Christ is found;
The first born of creation.
Of everything that was and is
He is our one foundation
His grace is found and did resound
In heav'nly proclamation
At Jesus' incarnation.

This fallen world was first called good;
Formed in God's own perfection.
In Adam's fall this world was spoiled
And trapped in sin's subjection.
Then to this world Christ was unfurled
When He, King of Creation,
Brought grace to every nation.

The Sovereign Lord of heav'n and earth
Has won for us salvation.
From Bethlehem, in lowly birth,
God's reconciliation
Began, so we would be set free
From death and condemnation,
To lives of jubilation!

Our Master came to save and serve;
His wayward sheep to cherish.
Christ, from His task, did never wane
That we might never perish.
There is no one, save God's own Son,
Who could redeem creation
And grant to us salvation.

△ O Father, Spirit, Son on high,
Give us the strength to serve You
As we, in our Baptismal grace,
Shout: "Christ has made all things new!"
Praise God, whose grace in every place,
Has shown His glory to us
And ever shall renew us!

In All Things Jesus Christ Is Found
Copyright © 2021 Jeffrey E. Burkart

All rights reserved.

Scripture References

Colossians 1:15-17

Ephesians 2:19-22

Psalm 19:1-4; Luke 2:8-14

John 1:14

Genesis 1

Romans 5:19

John 1:1-5

Matthew 2:1-12

1 Timothy 6:12-16

Acts 4:11-12

Luke 2:8-20

Colossians 1:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:19

John 5:24

Psalm 68:3-4

Luke 19:10

John 10:14-20; Psalm 23

John 14:6

2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Psalm 89:14-15

Colossians 3:1-4

Meter: 87 87 44 77

sunday or celebration service

Message: "In Christ in All Things"

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Some of us struggle trying to be "all things" to all people. Some of us are anxious looking at all the things on our "to-do" list at work or in the home. Some of us are often disappointed with all the things we expect of ourselves or others. In our Lutheran school world, the staff considers all the things that go into teaching a class, facilitating a variety of activities or administering a ministry. The congregation considers all the things including finances, staff, facilities and more that go into supporting an excellent Lutheran school ministry. "All things" is overwhelming, frustrating and humbling. "All things" is a constant reminder of our sinful nature and the sinful world.

The National Lutheran Schools Week theme, "In All Things," takes us to the theme text of Colossians 1:15–20 and the Good News that Christ is "In All Things." Five times in these six verses, the Apostle Paul references Christ "In All Things." Christ is the Creator of all things; He is before all things; He holds together all things; He reconciles all things to Himself.

Scripture begins with the creation of all things. In our text, Paul also begins, "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible." The eternal, triune God is the creator of all. Christ's participation in creation is described by the Apostle John, "In the beginning was the Word ... All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made" (JOHN 1:1, 3). While our Small Catechism explanations of the articles of the Apostles Creed divide the divine workings of the Father (creation), Son (redemption) and Holy Spirit (sanctification), the Holy Trinity works together in all things. Christ is also our Creator.

Adam and Eve, created in the image of God, are challenged by the serpent, "Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (GEN. 3:5). Satan suggested that they could be and do all things without their Creator. Succumbing to the temptation, the crown of creation was separated from the Creator.

scripture

Colossians 1:15–20

songs

"Christ be My Leader" (LSB 861);

"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies" (LSB 873)

Paul's introduction to Christ in all things states the reality of the "domain of darkness" (COL. 1:13). The fall brought Adam and Eve and their descendants to the darkness of broken relationships, physical pains and "thorns and thistles" outside of the perfect garden. Sin affects all things. Most of all it affects man's relationship with God. Instead of being like God, Adam, Eve and all of us hide in fear from God.

The Christ of all things in creation chose to reconcile His creation to Himself through Himself. Paul notes the means of reconciliation, "making peace by the blood of his cross" (COL. 1:20). Situations of conflict are sometimes addressed with the assistance of a "reconciler." Whether the distanced parties are spouses, business entities or sometimes even ministry professionals, a reconciler brings the parties together to examine the issues and to map a journey to reconciliation.

In Christ, God and mankind are brought together. As sinners, we have nothing to offer for resolution. Christ offers the only solution possible, Himself. The setting for resolution is Good Friday and the cross. Christ sheds His blood as the perfect and complete sacrifice for sin. All hostility has been removed between God and mankind.

The reconciliation is gifted to each of us through the Means of Grace. The little child is reconciled to God at the baptismal font. The word of reconciliation is announced in the absolution: "As a called and ordained servant of the Word and by Christ's command, I forgive you all your sins." The communicant leaves the Lord's Table where the body and blood of the cross are received, and the communicant is blessed to "depart in peace."

A staple of every early childhood and early elementary child's supply list is the school glue. The drops of glue miraculously hold together craft projects and other items. The Means of Grace are the glue of the church. They hold together God's people. They hold together what happens in our church and school. The Means of

Grace bring Christ to His people and hold the church family together in Christ.

Lutheran schools are places where the reconciliation through Christ is taught, lived and shared. The response to the preschool playground disagreement is more than “Say you are sorry.” The discussion includes, “Jesus forgives you and so do I.” The tension between teachers becomes part of the staff devotional dialogue, “We are the Body of Christ and each part shares its gift and blesses the body of the church.” The disagreement between parents and teacher is resolved in light of the mutual desire to bring Christ to the child. Competition between church and school for resources is more than a stewardship conversation, becoming an opportunity to refocus the mission of the church. The focus is on Christ who continues to bring peace to His church and to unite the church in reaching out energetically and faithfully.

It is easy to get distracted in our individual and family life. We compartmentalize our lives. Christ is present in our family devotions, but we’d rather not have Him hear the disrespectful words to the spouse or to parents. Christ is the center of the Bible class conversation, but we’d rather not have Him hear the gossip in the office. Christ is worshiped with our words in the sanctuary on Sunday morning, but our words in the Saturday evening social setting do not honor Him. Christ has forgiven all things. By virtue of our Baptism, Christ is present in us in all things and all places. Our prayer is that of the Apostle Paul that “in everything he might be preeminent.”

Christ may also be compartmentalized in the church. Christ “In All Things” affirms the message of the Divine Service. He is also the focus in the Sunday school classroom, conversations in the church and school office, the youth group gathering, the quilting group, the committee meeting, the care ministry initiative, and all things that take place during the week. “He is the head of the body, the church.”

Schools have moved way beyond “reading, ‘riting and ‘rithmetic,” technologically and otherwise. Schools cheer for their athletic teams; music leaders conduct choirs and plan concerts; parents are asked to partner in many school projects; administrators make sure state regulations and National Lutheran School Accreditation standards are met; teachers are aware of curriculum standards and test for their completion; board members continue to review and develop policies; school counselors are faced with challenging student and family dynamics. Lutheran school ministry is challenging.

Christ is “In All Things” in Lutheran schools. Christ is the topic of the preschool “Jesus time” and the junior high confirmation class. Christ is worshiped at school “chapel time” and at the baptismal assembly of the school family asking to have their child baptized into God’s family. Christ is in the phonetics lesson and algebra lesson. Christ is on the stage and in the gym. Christ is at the parent group and faculty meeting.

“Christ” is the **confession** of Lutheran schools. Martin Luther was opposed to attaching his name to any organization in Christendom. In 1522, Luther wrote, “I ask that men make no reference to my name and call themselves not Lutherans but Christians. ... Let us cast out party names and be called Christians after Him whose doctrine we have. ... Christ alone is our Master. He teaches me and all believers one and the same doctrine.”¹ While “Lutheran” is rightly and joyfully affixed to our church and school names, we carry on in the confession of the Reformation. Christ is in all things in our teaching.

Christ is the basis of our **commitment** to Lutheran schools. It is important to always reevaluate, “Why do we do what we do?” “Why do we invest in a Lutheran school ministry as parents or as a congregation?” “Why does a staff member serve in a Lutheran school when other opportunities might be more attractive?” The response is “because Christ is here!”

Christ is the focus of the **commission** of Lutheran Schools. Our contemporary context is sometimes referred to as a “post-Christian” era. Christianity is no longer the basis of morality and other aspects of our culture. The world needs Christ. Our community needs Christ. Our children and families need Christ. Lutheran schools provide the opportunity to bring Christ to those who do not know Him and to nurture in Christ those blessed to be in His church. Every school day, the mission field drives onto our church and school parking lots. Increasingly, children and families first hear of Christ in our schools. We praise God for that opportunity as we respond to His commission creatively and energetically.

We cannot be all things to all people. All the things on our list will not be accomplished. Not all aspects of school ministry will be efficient and effective. However, Christ has chosen to be “In All Things” for His church. We continue to worship and serve Him “In All Things” in our Lutheran school ministry. Amen.

¹ *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, Vol. II (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 856.

chapel talk: IN ALL THINGS

scripture

Colossians 1:15–20

song

“Earth and All Stars”
(LSB 817; AGPS 90)

First Things

- ★ Explore this question and develop a list (with children and staff): What is something you do well?
- ★ Also explore: What is something our church does well? What is something our school does well?
- ★ Do we do all things well?

With the gifts and abilities that God has given us, we all do some things well. However, there are many things we may not do well.

As we observe National Lutheran Schools Week, we listen to God’s Word from Colossians Chapter 1, and we celebrate Christ who is in all things and who, as the perfect Son of God and as our Savior, does all things well.

The Main Thing

The fact that we don’t do all things well is a reminder of our sinful nature. More critical than any skills or assignments that aren’t done well is the fact that we don’t obey God’s Law well. We don’t love God or others well.

Our text takes us to Christ who created all things well only to have His creation rebel against Him. In His grace, He saves well, “reconciling to himself all things.” Jesus fulfilled the Father’s plan perfectly. As the sacrifice was completed, Jesus said, “It is finished!”

The blessings of all that Jesus has done are brought to His children in the church (COL. 1:18). Our worship participation is imperfect, our attention is distracted, and we don’t sing the right notes, but God continues to offer the Means of Grace well. The blessings and promises of Baptism are always present; God’s Word is always true;

on the Lord’s Table is always a complete menu of Christ’s body and blood.

In praise and thanks to God, we strive to do all things well. We honor and respect our parents, teachers and others whom God has placed over us, we complete our assignments at home and at school with joy and with our best efforts, we pray trustingly, and we worship faithfully. Seeking to do all things well, we then rely on the grace of God to forgive our weaknesses and failures.

We rededicate our efforts individually and as a school to do things well so that God would be glorified and His people served.

When our earthly “assignments” are completed and we are blessed in His grace to gather at His throne, we will hear the voice of the One who did all things well, saying to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (MATT. 25:21).



“And through him
to reconcile
to himself all
things, whether
on earth or in heaven,
making peace by the
blood of his cross”
(COL. 1:20).

Prayer: All Things in Jesus’ Name

Jesus, we confess that we do not do all things well. Forgive our many weaknesses and failures. We give thanks that the plan of salvation was completed perfectly for us. We give thanks that through our Baptism You welcome us as Your forgiven children who are now privileged to do things well to praise You, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

monday: CHRIST

Student Devotion

“Do you have everything?” Perhaps that question is asked daily by your parents as you leave for another school day. The “everything” may be books, computers, homework assignments, permission slips, gym shoes, lunch and a variety of other necessities for a particular day or season.

“Do you have Jesus?” is not a question we need to ask or another thing to pack in a school bag. If having Jesus depended on our packing Him, we would have a big problem. In our sinful nature and in our selfish pride, we would always forget Him. We think that we can get along without Him, or we try to substitute Him with the things of the world.

God has not only chosen to come with us, but He has chosen to dwell in us. Our text shares that God has reconciled to Himself all things (v. 20). Though we are separated from God and try to live without Him, God comes to us in Christ and makes “peace by the blood of his cross.”

God “packs” Himself in us in Baptism. The blessings of Christ’s death and resurrection (ROMANS 6) become ours in our Baptism. Christ is in us and goes with us to school and every place else. What a blessing to know that even when we don’t always remember Him, He remembers us and blesses us with His presence.

Staff Devotion

“Do I have everything?” We ask ourselves that question in preparation for a school year and most likely every day of our teaching and serving. Depending on the other personal, family and professional activities that add to our “list,” the answer varies. Sometimes, we lack the things we need in teaching materials or in professional preparations.

The Good News is that, in Christ, we have “everything.” In our theme text, Paul reminds us that Christ has reconciled all things to Himself. He has reconciled each of us to Him through the “blood of his cross.” While we may forget things, and while we may even forget the blessings

scripture

Colossians 1:15–20

text

“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross” (COL. 1:19–20).

“Do you have everything?” may also be a question the teacher asks us as we leave our classroom to return home. We take Christ home with us and share Him and live in Him with our friends and family.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about your Baptism.** Do you know your baptismal birthday? How do we remember and celebrate that special day?
- ★ **Talk about the word “reconcile.”** What does the word mean? What does it mean to be reconciled to God and to be reconciled with others?

Things to Pray About

Lord, sometimes we forget things. Sometimes we even forget the most important thing — that we need You with us every day. Thank You for the blessings and promises of Baptism. Through the power of the Spirit, bless my remembering of You and my living for You in all things, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

of salvation that Christ has won for us, God has never forgotten us.

He has claimed us as His “thing” in our Baptism. Everything that Christ has done for us through His death and resurrection became ours when we were welcomed as His children through the water “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” One of the great blessings and joys of serving in a Lutheran school is the daily remembrance of and celebration of our Baptism. God is pleased to dwell in us and blesses us with everything we need for our salvation and our serving.

We may not always have everything we need for an efficient and effective school day. We will not always have the patience we need to serve every child or work with every fellow staff member. However, we have everything we need in Christ. We have peace with God. We have confidence in His grace. We can serve to His glory in all things every day.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about being God's "thing."** What assurance does your Baptism give you in your personal and professional life?
- ★ **Talk about "forgetting" and "remembering."** When do you forget God's presence and promises? What helps your remembering?

Things to Pray About

Lord, in ourselves, we don't have everything we need to be Your servants. However, You have given us Your presence and promises in our Baptism. You are everything, in every situation, every day. Thank You for Your grace and peace in our lives. Bless us as we share that Good News with children, families and with each other in all things, in Jesus' name. Amen.

more things

- ✚ Display (in school hallways, etc.) a timeline of the life of Christ.
- ✚ Find and display as many names for Jesus as can be found in the Bible.
- ✚ Have various classroom displays or enact scenes from the life of Christ.
- ✚ Have a baptismal birthday celebration.
- ✚ Share how Christ is "In All Things" in classrooms, arts, athletics, playground, etc.
- ✚ Encourage families to explore "Christ, in all things" in the home.

tuesday: CREATION

Student Devotion

You are all “creators.” You have been creating from your first Play Dough creation and coloring page (where you probably created outside the lines of the drawing). You continue to create in a variety of ways. Some of you create writings. Some of you create pieces of art. Some of you create in a dance or an athletic maneuver on a court or field. We praise and thank God for the variety of creative gifts that He has given us.

While we create some things, today’s Bible passage shares the message of Christ who created all things, “for by him all things were created” (v. 16). The passage takes us back to Genesis chapters 1 and 2 where we read the creation story. Father, Son and Holy Spirit were present in the beginning and in the beginning they “created the heavens and the earth” (GEN. 1:1). Jesus was present at creation and participated in the creation.

While we are amazed at the beauty of God’s creation, we also know that God’s creation is no longer perfect. The fall into sin affected us and everything in creation. The Christ of creation is also the Christ of re-creation. God’s immediate response to His fallen creation was to promise the Savior. Jesus, the Creator, came to earth and became one of us to save His creation. Jesus came to “reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven” (v. 20).

Staff Devotion

What’s your favorite creation place? Perhaps it’s the beauty of the flower garden in the yard, the local park or a state or national park. Perhaps it’s just looking at a sunrise or sunset. We are blessed to view creation scenes from different places and perspectives.

Consider another creation place. Consider your classroom, the school office, lunch room or other Lutheran school place. It is God’s creating place as He sends His created children into that place. Consider each child as His creation.

scripture

Colossians 1:15–20

text

“For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things were created through him and for him” (COL. 1:16).

In Christ, we are now part of His new creation. Through the gifts of the Spirit, we are now free to create for God’s glory and the good of His creation. We are also blessed to be part of His new and perfect creation when He comes again on the Last Day.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about God’s creation.** What things do you enjoy doing in God’s creation? How can we praise and thank God by caring for His creation?
- ★ **Talk about your creative gifts.** What do you enjoy creating?

Things to Pray About

Creator of all, thank You for the beauty of Your creation. Forgive us for often not taking care of what You have created. Thank You for not only creating us but for redeeming us “by the blood of his cross.” Send Your Spirit into us so that we might create to Your glory and the good of Your creation in all things, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Certainly, we experience each child as His fallen creation. Each child brings their sinful human nature and their sinful thoughts, desires, words and deeds into the school setting every day. Each staff member, as His fallen creation, also arrives as that sinful being.

The Good News is that our Creator is also our Reconciler. The God through whom “all things were created” (COL. 1:16) is also the God who came in the person of Jesus “making peace by the blood of the cross” (COL. 1:20). God has brought this reconciliation to us and to all His children in Baptism. God’s redeemed creation now serves as His creators: “We are his workmanship, created in Christ

Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (EPH. 2:10).

The Lutheran school, our classrooms and every school and church setting now become a creation place. Enjoy the view!

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about God’s creation in your classroom and other school settings.** How does seeing our students as God’s creation and re-creation affect our teaching and serving?
- ★ **Talk about God’s creation.** What is your favorite creation place?

Things to Pray About

Thank You, Lord, for the beauty of Your creation. Thank You for the beauty of Your new creations enrolled in our school. In Your grace, You have reconciled us to Yourself through the blood of the cross. Bless us as we serve Your creations, sharing Your creative and redeeming power. Send Your Spirit so that we might use all our creative gifts to give You glory in all thing, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

more things

- ✚ Share creative expressions: art, music, drama, etc. Consider holding a “creation fair.”
- ✚ Plan creation explorations: walks in the park, visits to museums, etc.
- ✚ Serve in God’s creation: Clean up a local park or the yards of elderly or shut-in neighbors, etc.
- ✚ Invite guests to share their travels: Where have they seen God’s creation?
- ✚ Invite a naturalist or other “expert” to share insights into God’s creation.
- ✚ Affirm the biblical creation story (using *Answers in Genesis* or other resources).
- ✚ Invite children and staff to bring in a baby or early childhood picture: “You are God’s creation.”

wednesday: CHILDREN

scripture

Colossians 1:17;
Colossians 3:18–21

text

“He is before all things, and in him all things hold together”
(COL. 1:17).

Student Devotion

(Take a family picture — your own or another — and cut it into pieces to resemble a puzzle.)

God created the perfect family picture. God put Adam and Eve in the perfect “home” — the Garden of Eden. With the fall into sin, the family “picture” was soon in pieces: Adam and Eve blamed each other for their sin of disobeying God. Cain killed his brother Abel.

Sin continues to cut up family pictures today. Our family pictures are cut up when moms and dads and brothers and sisters argue with each other. Sometimes, family pictures are cut up by separation and divorce. Sometimes, our family pictures are cut apart when someone in our family dies.

God is about putting family pictures back together again. He doesn’t use glue or tape. He uses the blood of Jesus who brings us to Him and back to each other again. Our Bible passage for today says, “in him all things hold together.” God grants us His forgiveness and brings us back together so that we can live together with each other in our families. Wives, husbands and children are all God’s people through their Baptism. The Apostle Paul writes about family members to the church at Colossae (COL. 3:18–21). Paul gives directions to wives, husbands, children and parents. Every family member is connected to Christ and seeks to love one

another in His perfect, forgiving love. Christ brings us together and keeps us together.

Sometimes, even Christian families experience separations. God’s Word takes us to His forgiveness and then takes us to Christ who is in all things in our family.

Things to Pray About

Thank You, God, for creating us to be in families. Forgive us for the things we do that cut families apart. Thank You for Your forgiving love to every family member. As we are individually connected to You, bless us as You connect us to each other. Christ, be in all things in our family. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about the things that separate us** from other family members.
- ★ **Talk about the things that your family enjoys** doing together.

Staff Devotion

(The “pieces” of the family picture used for the student devotion can also be used for the staff devotion.)

Often, we see only a piece of the family picture. As we observe the students in our classroom, we see the limited “picture” before us — the student at a certain, age, grade, etc. There are other pieces to the total picture. There are other family members who serve various roles in the family.

God sees the whole picture. God created the whole picture. God created male and female and united them as husband and wife. God blesses husband and wife with children. God’s perfect picture was cut apart by sin.

In Christ, God reconciles all things and all family members to Himself. Reunited and rejoined in Christ, the family gathers and worships in Jesus’ name, so that in Him all things hold together.

Lutheran school leaders serve children and families best when they look at the whole family picture and minister not only to the child but to the other family members in the picture.

Things to Pray About

Heavenly Father, through Your Son, Jesus, You reach out to families. Forgive the broken pictures in our own family and the families we serve. Bless us as we share Your reconciliation not only with the children in our classrooms but also with their family members. Bless us and our families so that we model the perfect unity of the Trinity in all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Things to Talk About

★ **Talk about the blessings of ministering to the family.** When have your connections with a student led to greater interaction with and ministry to the family? How can you and the ministry team serve families?

more things

- ✚ Review the Fourth Commandment and Explanation.
- ✚ Review the Table of Duties (Small Catechism) sections that address family roles.
- ✚ Host a school “family night” of games, movies or other activities.
- ✚ Display family pictures in the classroom or other settings.
- ✚ Routinely pray for families in the Divine Service or chapel services.
- ✚ Offer a parenting support class or group for school and community families.
- ✚ Organize a men/dads event to support the role of Christian father.
- ✚ Organize a women/moms event to support the role of Christian mother.
- ✚ Older children might be introduced to Lutherans for Life and other ministries which celebrate and protect the life of all children from conception.
- ✚ Pray for children’s advocacy groups in the local community.

thursday: CHURCH

Student Devotion

It's fascinating to learn about our body. We join King David (**PSALM 139:14**) in saying, "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Every part of our body is a statement of God's creative power and artistry. (Depending on the age of the children, the parts of the body and the wonders of human anatomy could be discussed.)

Our Bible reading for today describes another "body," the church: "He is the head of the body, the church." Paul also used this analogy with the church at Corinth (**1 COR. 12**) and shared a more detailed description. Paul emphasized that we are brought into this body through baptism (**1 COR. 12:13**). In our sinful nature, we were not connected to the Body of Christ. There was no life in us. Christ has connected us to the body of the church of which He is the head.

Just as there are many parts to the body — eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. — there are many parts to the Body of Christ, the church. Each part is unique. Each part is special. Each part has its job.

Our classroom of children and teacher who believe in Jesus as their Savior is a body. In this classroom we have all parts of the body. We are all connected, and together we live and serve each other and others. Just as each part of the body is important, we respect and honor each part of the body of the church. Paul shared, "If one member

suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (**1 COR. 12:26**). What a beautiful body Christ has made for His glory!

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about the church "body"** that meets in your school or classroom. What is beautiful about this body? When do we suffer together? When do we rejoice together?
- ★ **Talk about the Fifth Commandment** and the importance of protecting the physical body. Talk about the Eighth Commandment and protecting the reputation of fellow "body" members.

Things to Pray About

Heavenly Father, Christ, the Head of the body, came out of the grave so that the body of the church could follow. In the new life of the resurrection, You have made us the body of the church. Thank You for uniting us and gifting us. May Your body, in this place, bring life to others in all things, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Staff Devotion

Physical bodies get a lot of attention. Individually, we step on the scale, look in the mirror and otherwise monitor our physical health and appearance. Advertisers provide products and suggestions to make the body healthier or the aging less dramatic, or provide clothing and other items to cover or enhance our appearance.

There could never be enough medical procedures, products or regimens to cover the effects of sin — disease, aging, accidents, etc. Christ has covered us in Baptism with the robe of righteousness to again make us beautiful to Himself.

In His grace, we have also been brought together into another body, the church. This body, too, is often blemished. However, Christ seeks to nourish His body with the Word and at His Table.

Through the Spirit, body parts are attached so that they might bless one another and others. We celebrate the body that is in this place. We especially celebrate the parts that work together to serve the children and families of this church and school. If there are body parts that are wounded or ill or otherwise not functioning in a healthy way, we pray for them and one another so that

scripture

Colossians 1:15–20

text

"And he is the head of the body, the church" (**COL. 1:18**).

the whole body can work together. Just as we seek to have a healthy and productive physical body, we seek to have a healthy and productive church body.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about 1 Corinthians 12:12–27.** What does it mean to be Christ's body in this ministry setting? When do we suffer together? When do we rejoice together?

Things to Pray About

Lord Jesus, we rejoice that through Your resurrection You are the Head of this body, the church. Thank You for making us members of Your body. Thank You for the "body" that You have assembled in this time and place. Forgive and heal the injuries that we sometimes bring to this body. Thank You for the Means of Grace that keep this body healthy. Bless our serving together in all things, in Jesus' name. Amen.

more things

- ✚ Celebrate the church/school connections. Thank the congregation(s) that support the ministry of the school.
- ✚ Learn about the history of the congregation(s). When did the school ministry become part of the ministry of the church? Who have been some of God's faithful servants in the church and school ministry?
- ✚ Bring aspects of the school ministry into the sanctuary and the Divine Service: children's choir sings, school band plays, students share a chancel drama or other acts of praise.
- ✚ Celebrate and strengthen connections between children, families and the congregation(s).
- ✚ Invite congregation members into the school and classrooms as volunteers.
- ✚ Put student and staff names on a human body illustration: "We are the Body of Christ!"
 - ✚ Organize a health fair to emphasize the health of the physical body.
 - ✚ Sing "We Are the Church" (AGPS 252, note verse 2).

friday: COMMUNITY

scripture

Colossians 1:24–29

text

“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ” (COL. 1:28).

Student Devotion

“You’ve really grown.” The comment affirms our physical growth. “You are so mature for your age.” The comment compliments our behavior. We generally rejoice in those comments from grandparents and others.

In today’s Bible reading, the apostle Paul recognizes another form of maturity, “that we present everyone mature in Christ” (v. 28). We can evaluate physical maturity by measuring our height or weight. We can evaluate our social maturity by our behaviors in the classroom and at home. How do we measure maturity in Christ?

Maturity in Christ is, first of all, God’s gift to us. Using the “measurements” of the Ten Commandments, we are all very immature. We do not meet the standards of God’s Law. We all need to grow!

In our Baptism, we receive the blessing of forgiveness of sins. Immediately “in Christ” we are God’s children. We don’t deserve any favors or compliments from God. We do, however, continue to grow as God’s children. We seek to serve the One who has claimed us. We grow in Christ in all things.

We are blessed to be part of a church and school where we are encouraged to grow in Christ every day. Our growth in Christ is measured by what we know about Him. Our growth is also demonstrated by our behavior.

Our maturity is a witness to others. Just as our parents, grandparents, teachers and others see our growth, so

do our friends and neighbors. We want everyone in our family and neighborhood to know about Jesus so that they too might be part of His family and grow in Christ with us.

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about times when we have been immature.** What is God’s Good News for us?
- ★ **Talk about showing our maturity to others.** Why is it important to show that we are growing in Christ? How and when do others see our growth?

Things to Pray About

Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your care which helps me grow physically. Thank You for making me Your child in my Baptism and helping me to grow as Your child. Bless my parents, teachers and others who care about my maturity as a Christian. In all things, bless the sharing of my faith with my family and friends, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Staff Devotion

What is the goal of our teaching or serving? The first grade teacher wants better readers. The science teacher hopes students will think scientifically. The basketball coach teaches sportsmanship and fundamentals to assemble a winning team. The office staff works for a friendly and efficient office. Depending on our grade level, subject area or role, we have different objectives.

The Apostle Paul shares a higher and eternal goal: “Him we proclaim ... that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”

We confess our immaturity at all ages and life stages. We confess our spiritual immaturity. Paul’s prayer for the church at Ephesus is appropriate for the church at Colossae and the church today: “We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (EPH. 4:15). Gaining maturity through Christ’s Word, we then seek to live maturely in the faith.

We see immaturity every day in our classrooms and school. We see immature families. We see an immature community. God’s solution for spiritual immaturity

is “Him we proclaim.” We proclaim the crucified and risen Christ.

Today’s emphasis is “community.” The community observes the Lutheran church and school and judges their “maturity.” Do we respond maturely to issues and concerns in our church and school? Do our friends and neighbors perceive us individually and collectively as “mature in Christ”? We do not seek to be socially or culturally “mature” in the eyes of the world, rather we seek to be mature “in Christ in all things.” We truthfully share God’s Word on issues. We always share the truth of God’s love of His world for which He “gave His only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (JOHN 3:16).

Things to Talk About

- ★ **Talk about personal maturity.** How are we individually and collectively maturing in Christ?
- ★ **Talk about the perception of our maturity.** Do families perceive us as a “mature” school? How does the community perceive our maturity?

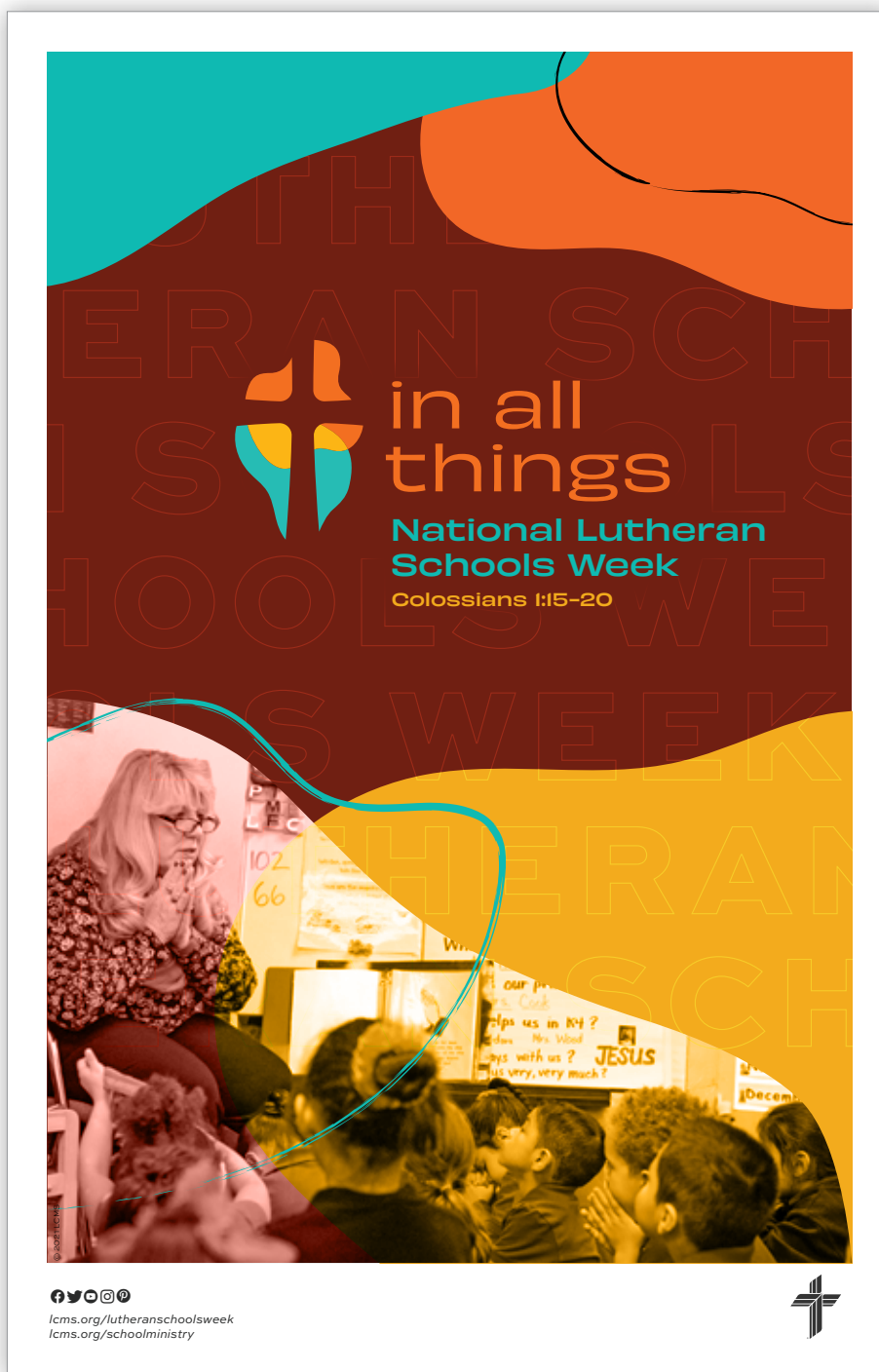
Things to Pray About

Heavenly Father, we confess that we have a lot of maturing to do. Bless us as we hear the proclamation of Christ in our worship and devotional life. Bless us as we share the proclamation of Christ so that all those connected with our church and school ministry may be mature in Christ in all things. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

more things

- ✦ Invite the community into the school and church: parking lot for a picnic or other event, school/church “open house,” etc.
- ✦ Engage in a demographic study of the community: Who’s living in the community? What are their ages, economic level, etc.? (Your district will have suggestions for sources of demographic information.)
- ✦ Recognize and thank community servants: police, firemen, etc. Invite them into the school for special recognitions.
- ✦ Introduce students to (and perhaps visit) community historical or cultural landmarks.
- ✦ Celebrate the cultural diversity of the community.
 - ✦ Invite community historians to the school to share the local history and contributions of community citizens (veterans, etc.).
 - ✦ Organize a prayer walk through the community.

poster sample



cms.org/lutheranschoolsweek
cms.org/schoolministry



bulletin insert sample



Lutheran Schools

**PROVIDING EXCELLENT
Academic Preparation**

- Developing love for and excitement about learning
- Excelling at reading, writing and effective communication
- Training minds for success at the next academic level
- Creating a strong work ethic, critical thinking skills and the ability to relate well with others

1,885 Schools + **21,222** Teachers + **35** Districts

Sharing the life-changing message of Jesus' love with more than 200,000 students, their families and the community


**RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION OF
Faithful Christian Disciples**

- Experiencing and celebrating God's lavish gifts of love, grace and mercy
- Sharing those gifts with others
- Being transformed by God's Word
- Clinging to the cross of Jesus

Learn more:
888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
lcms.org/school-ministry
f t i y o



© 2021 LCMS



Lutheran Schools

**PROVIDING EXCELLENT
Academic Preparation**

- Developing love for and excitement about learning
- Excelling at reading, writing and effective communication
- Training minds for success at the next academic level
- Creating a strong work ethic, critical thinking skills and the ability to relate well with others


1,885 Schools + **21,222** Teachers + **35** Districts

Sharing the life-changing message of Jesus' love with more than 200,000 students, their families and the community

**RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION OF
Faithful Christian Disciples**

- Experiencing and celebrating God's lavish gifts of love, grace and mercy
- Sharing those gifts with others
- Being transformed by God's Word
- Clinging to the cross of Jesus

Learn more:
888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
lcms.org/school-ministry
f t i y o



© 2021 LCMS

graphic samples



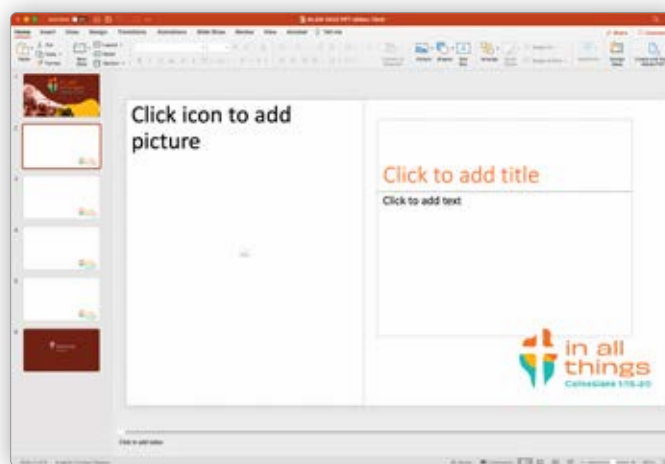
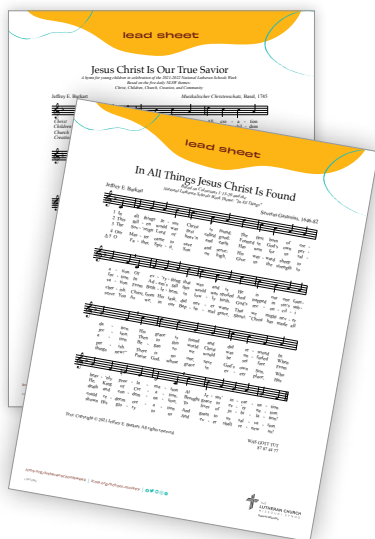
additional resources

Daily posters

Hymns and Musical Accompaniment

- ✦ “In All Things Jesus Christ is Found”
- ✦ “Jesus Christ is Our True Savior”

Presentation Slide Templates



NATIONAL
LUTHERAN
SCHOOLS
WEEK
NATIONAL
LUTHERAN
SCHOOLS



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD
School Ministry



lcms.org/lutheralschoolsweek
lcms.org/schoolministry