

The Shield of Faith November 2022

Faith Lutheran Church



The Word of the Lord proves true;
he is a shield for all those who
take refuge in him.
2 Samuel 22: 30-32

How Should Christian Parents and Teachers Help Children Grow in Virtue?

By Joy Pullmann

Two years of lockdown and quarantine disruptions to most American children's learning led to historic declines in student achievement in 2022. Test scores are easier to measure than other, possibly more important, ways lockdowns harmed children. Teachers are reporting that traits such as emotional resilience, relationship skills and self-control also have taken a serious hit.

Children are more anxious, less secure and more disorganized and unruly post-lockdown, according to teachers and mental health surveys. So teachers, counselors, principals and other school leaders are urgently seeking ways to help. One popular strategy, especially in secular schooling, is called "social and emotional learning," or SEL. (It's also sometimes called "socioemotional learning.")

The rise of SEL

SEL is billed as a way to help children develop important life skills such as relating to others, cooperating, managing their emotions and communicating. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a leading SEL advocacy organization, so far 27 states require public schools to teach SEL objectives in K-12, and all 50 states require this of public preschool programs.

Nobody seriously objects to the idea of teaching children patience and kindness. But many social-emotional learning programs are not effective, and many are openly anti-Christian. Many school staff are not aware of this when they welcome such programs into their schools.

Some SEL programs openly promote books that present an anti-Christian account of race. For example, Changemakers is a top SEL curriculum pick from CASEL for pre-K to fifth-grade kids. This curriculum's book recommendations for teachers include "How to Be an Anti-Racist" by Ibram Kendi and "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo. Both of these books express moral condemnation of people based solely upon the color of their skin — that is, they encourage their readers to view other human beings in unbiblical and racist ways.

Continued on pg 2

Changemakers doesn't recommend such books alongside others with competing viewpoints as a way to understand what many people think right now. It recommends only materials with this perspective for use by teachers and in schools — a perspective which contradicts Christianity's views of sin and righteousness, and its rejection of racism of every variety — by people of any ethnicity against people of any other ethnicity.

Other SEL programs encourage popular sexual sins and confusion about the two sexes God has made. The LGBT advocacy organization Human Rights Campaign tells teachers that social and emotional learning lessons “are a wonderful time to include children's experiences with LGBTQ issues.” CASEL says throughout its many educational materials that SEL is a useful tool for encouraging children to explore their “identities,” including their “gender.” Such materials are simply inappropriate for any Christian institution.

Virtue without religion?

To faithful Christians, the problems are obvious with schools endorsing racism and homosexual acts and rejecting God's designation of each person's sex at conception. That doesn't mean, however, that a social and emotional learning program that stops short of such blatantly anti-Christian teachings is a good one. More subtle anti-Christian philosophies are pervasive throughout many other educational tools and programs, because most educational institutions today are either passively or actively hostile to Christianity.

Because courts and other government institutions banned Christianity from public schools decades ago, government-run schools must attempt to meet children's spiritual needs without acknowledging God. That is what's behind the use of surface-level emotional regulation and conflict management tools that avoid underlying spiritual realities, such as yoga classes, mindfulness exercises and “reconciliation circles.”

That is also what's behind the push for socioemotional learning. It is an attempt to teach children virtue without religion. Such an approach cannot be very effective, because it rejects the source and perfect model of virtue: Christ himself.

So Christians and Christian school leaders need to apply careful discernment to any materials or programs marketed to them as supporting children's mental health or character development. We also need to teach children virtues and warn them against vices primarily with God's Word, rather than treating it as an afterthought. We should be forthrightly and deeply catechizing children, parents and teachers. This includes training them in explicitly Christian ways of renewing their minds, treating others with love and respect, and repenting when they do not.

Continued on pg 3

As public schools themselves are unable to use thoroughly Christian understandings of sin and repentance in their discipline policies and curricula, parents who place their children in secular environments must make an extra effort to teach these things at home.

Priceless and effective weapons

We do not need to flounder about the edges of repentance and soul formation and seek poor substitutes, as the world does. We Christians have priceless and effective weapons in the war against sin and the devil that the world rejects: God's own Word, and His precious body and blood. We should use them — daily, as God's Word commands.

Our churches and ancestors in the faith have given us many other excellent tools for character development based on Christ's Word, such as our catechisms and hymnals. Our schools must pass down these treasures of our Christian inheritance to the next generation, and teach children how to use them for the daily Christian work of repentance, forgiveness and rejoicing.

These tools should be integrated into all instruction and the daily life of Christian schools and homes, just as secular schools try to integrate their poorer substitutes into all of their instruction. Discipline procedures, for example, should reflect the Ten Commandments, Matthew 18 and 1 Timothy 5. In school and at home, children should memorize their catechisms and many Bible passages, as should parents and teachers.

The Bible explicitly teaches how to apply God's law so that we know what sin is, how to confess those sins and receive absolution, and words we can use, such as the Psalms, to rejoice in our forgiveness, unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ, and eternal salvation. Christian schools must work hand in hand with pastors trained to catechize the sheep in such matters and to give good instruction to teachers and school administrators on Christian means of spiritual instruction.

Christian schools need to use explicitly theological approaches to meet children, parents and teachers' genuine need to find their place in the world and feel love and belonging. SEL is a poor imitation of what character development and soul formation can be in our Christian homes and schools. We can do a lot better — and, for the sake of our young brothers and sisters in Christ, and the continuation of the faith, we must. Christ will guide and bless our efforts.

Continued on pg 4

This is an article I thought all of us as Christians and parents should read and digest at Faith. While the article articulates everything very well, I wanted to add one last thing to the author's chain of thought. These great Christian formations for young people can only ever truly be cultivated in the home. Schools and churches can help with catechesis and are great guides in these matters, but only parents can truly catechize their children well enough to stand up to the assaults of Satan and the sea of lethal ideas and religions offered by the world.

Live in the Word daily with your children, for their sake and for yours. Pray the Psalms. Study the book of Proverbs. Let God's Word take its authoritative role in teaching us. If this sounds daunting and scary, fret not. I am starting a new bible study at Faith designed to learn these treasure troves of scripture and how to pray and engage with them.

As soon as I have more details on these studies I will announce them at service times and in our Newsletters.

-Pastor

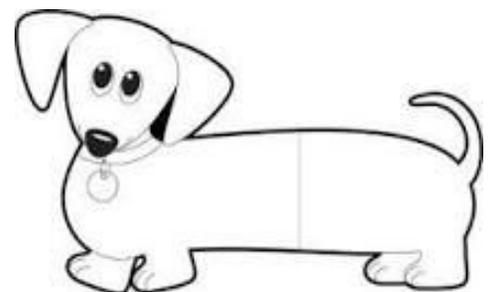
Chili & Hot Dogs

Saturday, November 5th, 4 PM - 7 PM

Please join us this day for some food and fellowship. We will provide hot dogs, buns, chips and water. You may bring some chili or other food to share, your choice of beverage and a chair to sit around one of our fire pits.



Hope you can come!



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

The LWML Kentuckiana Zone Fall Retreat will be held on November 12 at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 4205 Gardiner View Ave., Louisville, KY 40213. Registration opens at 9 AM and the Retreat will be from 9:30 AM – 2:00 PM. A \$10 registration fee includes lunch. The speaker will be Archbishop Joseph Ochola Omolo (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya). For the ingathering, members are welcome to make a donation towards the ministry work of Archbishop Omolo in Kenya.

Offerings will be given towards Hope for the Destitute, a nonprofit organization in Kisumu, Kenya that provides educational support for orphaned children and shelter for needy widows. For a Servant Event, we will make Witness Bracelets for MOST Ministries. Everyone is invited.

Bible BootCamp

(for middle and high school youth)

An intensive study in Historic Reformation Theology

*

2nd and 4th Sunday every month / 6 PM - 7 PM

*

Classes will be in person with streaming available.

(Visit kluthyouth.com for locations and streaming details.)

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. - 1 Corinthians 12:27

Dear Members of Faith,

Soon another year will be coming to an end. Along with that we will have another election meeting for our church officers and boards.

On behalf of our congregation, the Board of Christian Discipleship would like to thank those of you who have and are continuing to serve in these areas. We ask that if you aren't serving at the present, to prayerfully consider having your name placed on the ballot for the upcoming meeting on 11/13/22. If you have questions about any officer or board position listed below, please talk with or contact John Roehrig at (502) 439-3804. Thank you.

Two-Year Term Positions

President

Vice President

Recording Secretary

Treasurer

Elders - 3 positions open

Board of Christian Education - 1 position open

Board of Christian Discipleship - 1 position open

Board of Trustees - 3 positions open

Yours in Christ,

The Board of Discipleship

Carol Cockerel, Cindy Pierce, Brenda Roehrig and John Roehrig

Servants for November

Assistants	Readers
11/6 Jose Beaton	11/6 Greg Sullinger
11/13 Darrell Pryor	11/13 Addison Beaton
11/20 Greg Sullinger	11/20 Linda Lewis
11/27 John Roehrig	10/23 Steve Anderson

Ushers	Altar Guild
Greg Sullinger & Garrett Sullinger	Raija & Pastor Stebbins

Birthdays

Carol Cockerel	11/3	Paige Owens	11/9
David Futch	11/4	Rachel Marquardt	11/12
Jeff Gabhart	11/9	Diane Blackwell	11/25
Becky Gibson	11/9	Reagan Sullinger	11/25
		Ken Lewis	11/30

Anniversaries

Jeff & Paige Owens	11/05/1994	Bob & Evelyn Davidson	11/29
Josh & Melanie Rosenthal	11/25/2000		

Greeter: Carol Butler

Financial Update

Cash on Hand: 31,328.87 Goal: 90,000.00

3 weeks expenses: 7,699.38 3 weeks receipts: 9,599.00

Loan Balance: 174,644.16