

The

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In Church and Community



Ministry Spotlight:

School Partnership with Susan B. Anthony School

by Pr. Justin Kosec



unimaginable one year ago.

For an educator, each day is filled with countless challenging decisions. Budget, hours, parental expectations and partnership, class performance—all combine to place enormous pressure on educators. In the wake of COVID-19, educators face vast new challenges: distance learning, rolling quarantines, and threats to classroom safety that were simply

More than ever, we have seen the critical role schools play in our society.

At Our Savior's, where we strive to connect faith to everyday life, this poses a challenging question: how can we support the schools that educate our children?

We like to believe we are connected to the families that call Our Savior's "home." But schools are much closer to the pulse of a



family's everyday life. The staff at Our Savior's identified that to truly engage our community, we were called to support one of its schools.

Last year, the Love in Action Core Ministry team, began to review possible school partnerships. We discussed which schools were close to Our Savior's. We learned from the experience of other churches in partnership with schools. I visited several schools to meet with administrators. At Our Savior's, momentum built as our WELCA group decided to use Susan B. Anthony Elementary School (SBA) as a mission project for 2019, designating \$1,000 of their own money to support the mission of the school. And critical volunteers from the OSL family—including Nancy Krueger, DeAnn Corcoran, Brenda Bernard, and Tara Eckstaine—helped the staff develop priorities for a school partnership.

Finally, early in 2020, Nancy Krueger, who retired as principal from Laura Wilder and currently serves as OSL's WELCA president, helped lead the charge to build a relationship with SBA. Nancy and I attended a staff meeting to pledge Our Savior's ongoing support to the school and its staff.

Just as we were making our first plans to support SBA, the COVID-19 pandemic rewrote the rules.

Immediately, OSL committed resources to support the staff. The Love in Action team listened closely to the staff at SBA to determine how our resources would best serve the SBA community. We sent \$50 Hy-Vee gift cards to

every member of the staff at SBA, from administrators to the janitorial staff. And as the school year slid into the summer, we began discussions how we could support the staff when the new school year started.

In this time when needs arise quickly, careful preparation has paid off. Once school began, kindergarten teachers at SBA could see they needed seat bags for children who could no longer share supplies. Our Savior's responded by purchasing seatback bags for every kindergartner at SBA.

Here, we can see a

Dear Our Savior's Lutheran Church,
Thank you for the gift card in appreciation
of Teacher Appreciation Week. I am
very grateful!
We are very lucky at Susan B.
Anthony to have your support.
Thank you,
Melissa Hultgren
2nd Grade, Susan B.
Anthony



Dear friends at Our Savior's,
Thank you so much for
the HyVee gift card that you
provided to me as part of the
Susan B Elementary Staff! It
was an amazing pick-me-up
during a very stressful time.
Your support of our city's public
schools is so wonderful & is so
appreciated! Thanks for sending
some sunshine in the stormy days.
Well wishes,
Mrs. Joline Gordon
PT @ Susan B Anthony



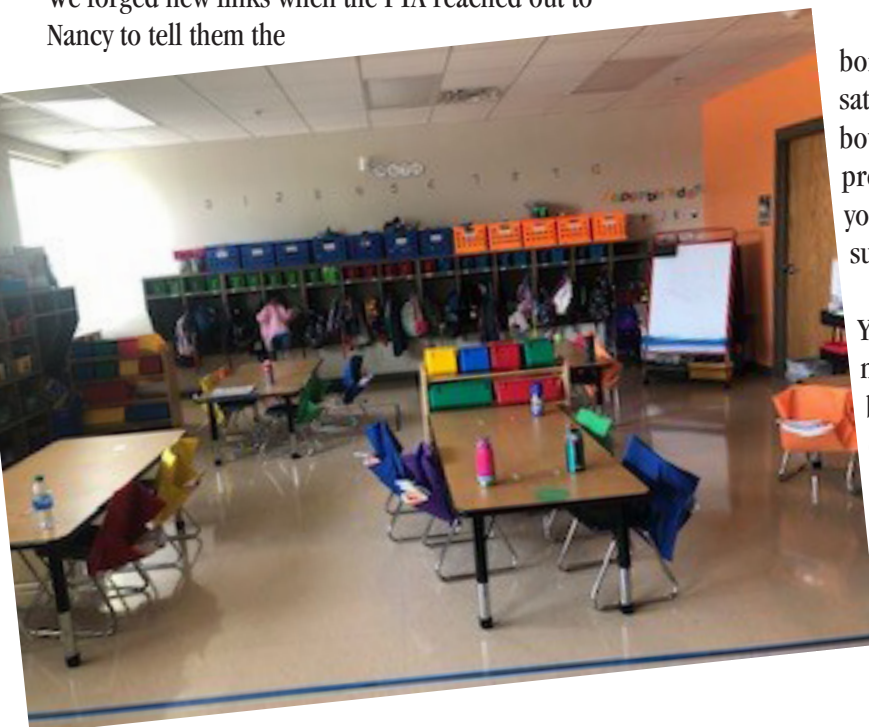
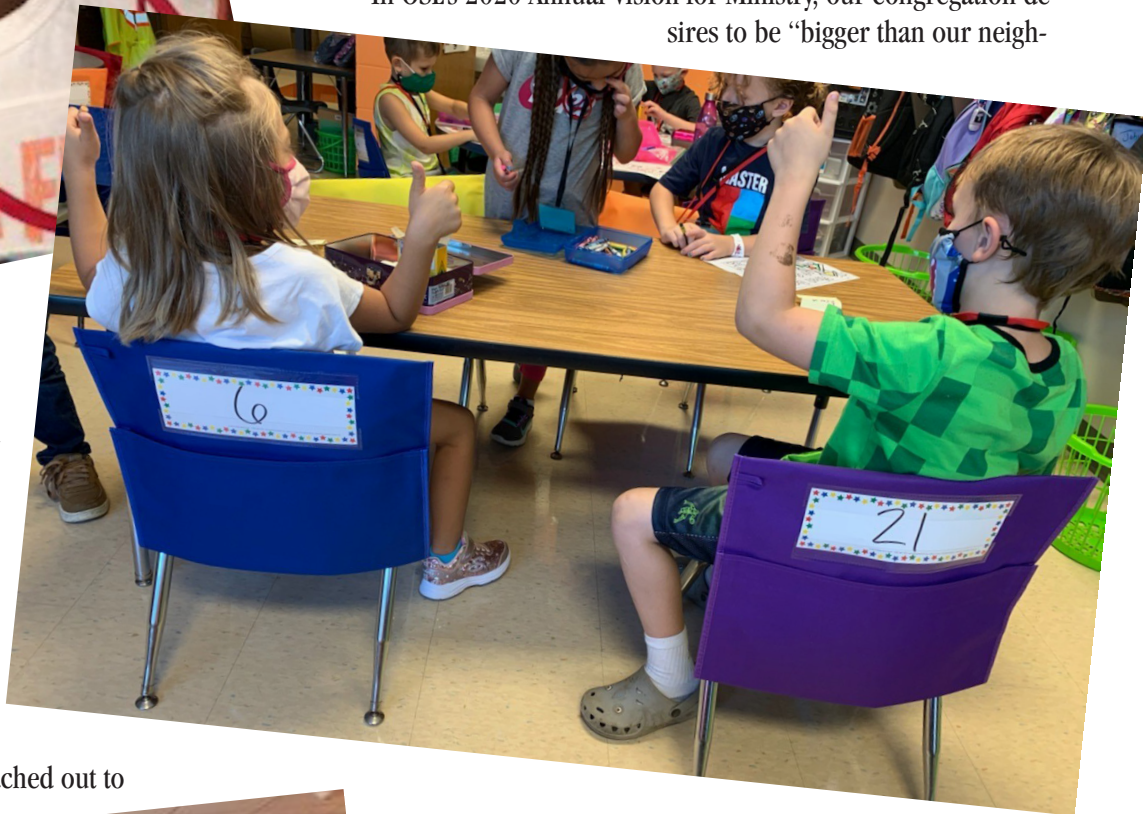
chain of thoughtfulness forged from many small connections: The school identified a need. People in the school community remembered the school's connection to Our Savior's. Our Savior's responded with characteristic generosity and love. With each new opportunity to serve the SBA community, we forge new links in this chain of thoughtfulness.

We forged new links when the PTA reached out to Nancy to tell them the

teachers needed help with masks. Could Our Savior's do something to help? Nancy brought the need back to our Peace by Piece quilters group, who eagerly answered the call. Some bought fabric. Some started sewing. Some coordinated masks and resources. In little more than two weeks, our congregation sewed over 700 child-sized masks to ensure every student could wear a mask at school.

We will continue to forge new links this fall, as our partners at SBA see the congregation's care and attention and as they feel surrounded by our prayers. We will continue to forge new links as OSL ministry teams imagine how they can love and serve SBA as part of their ministries.

In OSL's 2020 Annual Vision for Ministry, our congregation desires to be "bigger than our neigh-



borhood," a congregation actively "in conversation about mission" and purpose. We seek to push out our boundaries and discover the joy of being an engaged, generous presence in our community. Simply read some of the many thank-you notes received by OSL staff from SBA to see abundant signs of such new life in the budding partnership with SBA.

You can join this ministry, too. Simply listen for further opportunities presented by the Love in Action Core Ministry Team—or by any other ministry team here at Our Savior's. Pray without ceasing for the students, staff, faculty, and administrators at SBA. Pray for the school as you drive past its neighborhood. Call the church office and volunteer to serve on an SBA task force. Identify yourself as a parent-member of the SBA Parent-Teacher organization. Find your way to serve this partnership as we live out our mission to connect faith to everyday life. ♦



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Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Sunday Morning

Celebrate Worship – 8:45 A.M., Celebrate Center

Festive Worship – 10:15 A.M., Sanctuary

Television and Internet

Celebrate: 9:00 A.M., KTTW (cable channel 9; channel 7.1)

Festive: 1:00 P.M., KSCB (cable channel 30; channel 53),

pre-empted on October 11

Facebook Live, 8:45 and 10:15 A.M.

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