

Charger

Legacy



May 2021

Illinois Lutheran High School





A Year to Forget or Remember?

I can't begin to tell you how many times over the past few weeks I have heard people say that they would like to just forget about the past year; corona virus, social and political unrest, fires in California, hurricanes in the southeast, you name it. It seemed like one thing after another, none particularly good. While it is human nature to want to "move on" to better things, it is not always bad to reflect on the past, especially in hard times. While no one would argue that the last year had its trying moments, is it possible to see some good things as well?

As I look over the past year, I can certainly see the hand of God working to bless our school during these trying times. From the onset of the corona virus, our dedicated staff quickly moved to eLearning. Each day, quality instruction given in light of God's word reached the ears and hearts of our students who were locked down at home.

In my 40+ years in education, I've never seen a staff so willing to pivot to a new instructional model in such a short period of time. Their eagerness for success was felt by students and parents alike. And God continues to bless our educational efforts. When we began in-school learning this fall, we had no idea how long we would be able to continue offering an in-school program. But days turned into weeks, weeks to months, and by God's grace we are still able to daily serve our children in person.

During this year, many of our families fell on hard financial times. More than ever, we needed to provide additional financial aid to those families. During a brief campaign in

which we asked our members to help us fill this need, God's generous people opened their hearts and wallets, and in a short time an additional \$65,000 was donated. It's amazing to see God's people respond to a need so quickly.

2020 also provided us the opportunity to look to the future. Two major efforts, a renovation of the elementary campus and a capital campaign, were undertaken. While the capital campaign was postponed until fall, the Lord provided another way for us to move forward with the planning of the elementary project. In November, the delegates approved the project and designated \$500,000 from the sale of the Moeller farmland to Phase 1 of the project. Then, Trinity Lutheran Church followed by designating \$500,000 of their portion of the farmland sale to the project. What a miraculous and timely blessing from the Lord! Great is His faithfulness, even in hard times.

After reflecting on the past and seeing God's unending blessings, we can certainly look to the future of our school with full confidence that His protection and faithfulness will continue.

In His Service,



Joe E. Archer
Senior Administrator



"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever!"

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Legacy is a publication of
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supporters. We want to inform and
inspire you with news about our
ministry and the ILS family at large.

Current and previous issues can be
found at ilhs.org/ilhs-alumni/.

A Living Legacy in the Church and Community

Name: Hannah Rubin
Class of 2017
Age: 22
Occupation: Student at Concordia
University - Chicago

Life since graduating from Illinois Lutheran has been full of challenges and blessings. After graduation, I chose to make a move up to the Twin Cities to study music. I had been going to ILS since 2003, and as great as the Twin Cities were, my heart was back home. I also knew the faith I had been brought up in would be better grown at Concordia.

While at Concordia, I have been given some amazing opportunities. Even though I now study psychology, being close to home has given me the ability to be involved in music at Amazing Love in Frankfort. I have recently been made the head of the music department there, serving as their music coordinator.

Since my major change, I've been able to not only meet a lot of new people and learn much about a subject I'm very passionate about, but also be an intern at the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) for Cook County/North Suburban. I get to work with a lot of amazing people who have a heart to serve those who need it. I do some research and administrative work, and I also have the opportunity to lead support groups if I wanted to.

This internship has confirmed the passion that I have for helping people in their lowest hour of need. I am going to be taking that passion to pursue my education further at Trinity Christian College in their Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program.



Hannah Rubin with her sister, Sarah (class of 2014), and mother, Joan Rubin.

I must say that I can't take full credit for all these successes. ILS set me up to succeed in the classroom as I am able to graduate early due to the work ethic ILS has taught me. But even above that, ILS has taught me how to get through daily life rooted in Christ. College, and life in general, can be very stressful and overwhelming at times, but being able to find comfort in the One who is the God of all comfort is something that helps me get through the trials life throws.

Time has really flown by since graduating from Illinois Lutheran, but I am thankful for all the years spent there. The teachers that I was able to get to know, as well as my peers there, will be people I will never forget.

A Living Legacy in the Church and Community

Name: Angela Kuelper

Class of 2002

Age: 37

Occupation: Marketing and Community Relations for SERVPRO of Chicago Heights, Crete and Beecher

The education that I received at Illinois Lutheran made a huge impact on my adult life, though to be honest at the time I was not happy to say the least. I transferred to Illinois Lutheran High School at the start of sophomore year, a decision that my parents made for me. As a teenager, I was less than thrilled with the idea of changing schools, and I truly made that known from day one. A public school student all my life, I viewed the change in schools as nothing more than a punishment.

During my freshman year, with the country still healing from the Columbine shootings, schools were quickly making changes in an attempt to make schools safer. These changes included my school installing metal detectors and doing searches. My parents made the choice that a private school education may be just what I needed. I went from being one of over 800 students in my class to being one of less than twenty! I admittedly used to let others know how unhappy I was with the being there. I could not imagine at that time how much the next three years would make an impact on the rest of my life.

When you are a public school student in a large school, you may be able to look back and remember a few teachers and you may be able to say that one or two impacted your life as an adult. For me, I can truly say that each teacher at Illinois Lutheran in the three short years that I was there made an amazing impact on my life. When I look back at my first year at Illinois Lutheran, the first person I think of is Miss Schuppe. I very fondly remember a short heart to heart in the hall that we had where she basically told me, you can accept where you are or you can fight it; it's your choice. A simple statement but a meaningful one. I thought that I had no control, but in fact I did. I had control over my own actions and how I chose to look at the next few years.

Slowly over time, I became closer with my classmates and got more involved by joining yearbook and show choir. I started to learn that this was not just a school, but a community and more importantly a family. Every teacher truly did care about their students



and wanted the best for us. We were not just another face or another paper to grade. Mrs. Spiaser instilled a love of English and reading in me that I now work to instill in my own children. Mr. Rimpel taught me that I could find the commonalities between my own faith and the Lutheran faith and learn to respect the differences.

Now, as the mother three young boys, I use some of the lessons of love that I learned from attending Illinois Lutheran. I have instilled a sense of community and passion for helping others in my children, something that I live every day. My education taught me that to live a Christian life you need to put others first and give back. I chose a career that allows me to help others and give back to the community that I grew up in. Just a few years ago, I came back to Illinois Lutheran and was flooded with an overwhelming feeling of joy seeing those same teachers that touched my life almost twenty years later still teaching and still impacting so many young lives.

Through my position at SERVPRO, I see families at sometimes one of the worst moments of their lives. In those moments I find myself reflecting on God's word and looking to Him for the best way to handle the situation. I find that I hold to the truth that God commands us to love one another and to give to others. My education at Illinois Lutheran molded me into the loving, giving, compassionate person I am today, and I am thankful that my parents were able to see what was best for me, even when I could not. I honestly do not know what path that my life would have taken without the education and the love I received from Illinois Lutheran.

A Living Legacy in the Church and Community

Name: Gary Flaig
Class of 1993
Age: 45
Occupation: History Teacher

When I graduated from Illinois Lutheran, the high school was housed in 4 or 5 rooms in what is currently the grade school building. At that time, I did not realize how important the Christ centered education that I had received actually was. As the years went by and I continued to grow in my faith, this became apparent. I am very thankful for this foundation as it has been a guide for my adult life.



Gary Flaig with his wife Christine and sons Nicholas and Dylan.

During my senior year, I met Christine, and we were married at Trinity in 1997. In 2002, Dylan was born and in 2006, Nicholas was born. As parents, we knew exactly what school our kids would attend. Dylan graduated from ILS last year and is currently a freshman at Western Illinois University studying to be a teacher. Nicholas is in the 8th grade at ILS. We are blessed to have a school that shares the love of Christ on a daily basis. Because of ILS, our boys are growing in the Lord's grace each day.

When I left Illinois Lutheran, I had no idea what I wanted to do for a career. After a few years, I realized that I wanted to help people and this led me to a career in Emergency Medical Services. I spent 20 years working as a paramedic and loved it. However, in 2007, I found myself wanting to help others in a different way, so I returned to school to become a teacher. In 2011, I graduated from Trinity Christian College with a BA in History Education. I am currently teaching various levels of US history at Bloom Trail High School in Steger. When I started teaching, I realized very quickly that this was what God had intended for me, and He put me at a school that I love. I am in my 9th year teaching and have just earned a Master's Degree in US History from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

As one can imagine, I was quite nervous returning to school as an adult. However, that nervousness went away as the skills I learned at ILHS came back fairly quickly. As the work began to build, I was thankful for the teachers and curriculum at Illinois Lutheran as it truly prepared me for this level of learning. Additionally, I am grateful for the Christ centered instruction that ILS provided. Each day, I was able to hear of Christ's love, and while I cannot share this specifically while I teach, I can be an example of Christ's love in my interactions with others.

Illinois Lutheran has been a tremendous blessing in not only my life but also in the lives of my children. Over the last several years, I have had the pleasure to serve Illinois Lutheran as the Chairman of the Board of Directors. I have been able to see firsthand what it takes to provide this quality Christian education on a daily basis. I have witnessed the high school grow from a few rooms at the Trinity campus to the current much larger facility at the Zion campus, and we are on the cusp of an exciting new building project to enhance the ability of Illinois Lutheran in providing a Christian education. I am thankful for Illinois Lutheran and excited to see how God uses ILS to further show Christ's love to students of the Church, community, and world.

Illinois Lutheran High School Class of 2020



Elijah Dorn, Valedictorian

Martin Luther College

- Secondary Education

Isabella Biesterfeld

Western Illinois University

- Business

Paige Biesterfeld

Martin Luther College

- Elementary Education

Rachel Bohlmann

Prairie State College

- Early Education

Ruth Bohlmann

Undecided

- Acting

Megan Brown

Purdue University Fort Wayne

- Music Therapy



Olivia Swenson, Salutatorian

Olivet Nazarene University

- Zoology

Paige Craig

Prairie State College

- Liberal Arts

Ronald Daly III

Olivet Nazarene University

- Zoology

Merrick Danzy

Undecided

- Nursing

Ronald Emery

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

- Environmental Resources Training Center

Dylan Flaig

Western Illinois University

- Music Education

Illinois Lutheran High School Class of 2020

Nina Flamini

Olivet Nazarene University
- Nursing

Daniel Hall-Clark

Prairie State College
- Psychology

Emily Hollifield

Olivet Nazarene University
- Nursing

Joshua Kenebrew

Western Illinois University
- Musical Theatre

Li Yuming

University of California, Davis
- Undecided

Joshua McPherson

Undecided
-Engineering

Angelina Mercer-Podbielski

Prairie State College
- Physical Therapy

Jessica Moseley

Western Illinois University
- Undecided

Julian Ojeda

University of Illinois at Chicago
- Business

Madison Peters

Fox College
- Veterinary Technology

Lauren Przedziecki

Calumet College of St. Joseph
- Early Childhood Education for Music

Titus Rivas

Olivet Nazarene University
- Business Administration

Abigail Sodergren

Prairie State College
- Dental Hygiene

Brandon Spence

Undecided
- Physical Therapy

Nataly Trejo

Harper College
- Undecided

Timothy Vroom

Undecided
- Commercial Aviation

Morgan West

Columbia College Chicago
- Fine Arts

Dwan Westmoreland Jr.

Waubensee Community College
- Sports Management

Zhang Shaoxiong

Michigan State University
- Undecided

New Faculty & Staff



Executive Director – Mr. Duane Vance was born into an Air Force/Naval family in Peru, Indiana. Through his early childhood, the family moved several times until settling in Jacksonville, Florida. Duane would become a graduate of Orange Park High School in Orange Park, Florida and then begin his studies at the University of North Florida during his college years. Here, he would meet his wife, Rebecca Ford Vance, and graduate with a degree in secondary education with an emphasis in social studies in 2001. Duane and Rebecca would marry that same year. Rebecca has been an RN since 2001 and now serves as the healthcare coordinator for the La Grange Special Education School District. Duane and Rebecca have two children. Sarah was born in 2003, and Nathan was born in 2006.

Mr. Vance began his educational career at Ridgeview High School in Orange Park, Florida as the school's lead economics teacher in December 2001. He also taught geography and civics/American government. Duane also coached men's golf and baseball during his time at the high school. He was also very active in lay leadership in a new mission start on the east side of Jacksonville. There, he served as a council member for Victory Lutheran Church for three years. In the summer of 2005, he and Rebecca made the decision to move to the north side of Chicago to join family in the Milwaukee and Chicago areas. Shortly after his arrival and after joining Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Morton Grove, Mr. Vance was called on an emergency basis to teach grades 3-5 at Jerusalem Lutheran School and accepted. In 2007, he attained WELS Synod certification through Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. He taught grades 3-5 for 5 years before transitioning to grades 6-8.

In 2013, Mr. Vance became the principal of the school. In 2016, he received his masters degree in educational leadership from Martin Luther College. After 15 years of service to Jerusalem, he joined Illinois Lutheran Schools as the executive director in the summer of 2020. Mr. Vance also serves the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in a few different roles. He is a captain for the synod's accreditation body, known as WELSSA, where he makes usually three visits to schools a year throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan to evaluate ministries and help drive efforts toward school improvement. He also serves on the nomination committee for the Southeastern Wisconsin District for the synod. The Vance's feel tremendously privileged and blessed to be in service to ILS and the local congregations who support this educational ministry.

Miss Katty Van Alstine grew up in Wisconsin and graduated from Martin Luther College in 2018 with a degree in Elementary Education and Secondary Mathematics Education. Before coming to ILHS, she taught math and was a dorm supervisor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Currently, Katty teaches different levels of math classes in our high school.

When asked what she enjoys most about teaching, Katty said, "I really enjoy creating relationships with students and connecting with their lives outside the classroom. It's a cool opportunity to relate to students and show how you can live out your faith in daily life."



Katty enjoys most every activity outside including hiking, running, hammocking, camping, rollerblading, etc. She also likes playing board games, traveling to new places, and practicing guitar.

New Faculty & Staff



Mr. Joseph Keller grew up in McLean, VA just outside Washington D.C for most of his life. He comes from a family of four: Parents Karen, Ed, and younger sister, Lee who all spent most of their lives in the DC area.

Joey graduated from high school in 2013 and went to Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN the following fall. After spending 5 ½ years there he graduated in December 2018 and received an assignment to teach 5th Grade in Grenada, West Indies. He spent 1 ½ years in Grenada teaching and exploring the beautiful Caribbean island.

In his free time Joey enjoys hiking, biking, and skiing. You can often find him in the warmer months detailing cars in his driveway for his other hobby.

Mrs. Laura Cook grew up in Brownsville, WI and attended school at St. Paul's Lutheran. She attended Winnebago Lutheran Academy in Fond du Lac, WI. She went to Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN and graduated in 2012.



Laura met Kendall Cook in college, and they got married after she graduated in 2012. They moved to Milwaukee, WI where Kendall attended Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. They moved to College Station, TX for Kendall's intern year and moved back to Milwaukee for his last year of seminary. Upon Kendall's graduation in 2015, they moved to Norfolk, NE to serve a church. While in Norfolk, Laura taught part time at St. Paul's, Norfolk. They moved to Crete in 2019 where Kendall serves as pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Laura and Kendall have three children, Logan, Tristan, and Sawyer. Laura enjoys raising her boys, reading, running, watching football and baseball, and spending time with her husband. She is very excited to have her own classroom.

Faculty Anniversaries



Mr. Nathan Hinz - 25 Years

Mr. Nathan Hinz is from Wisconsin and graduated from Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. Nate earned his masters degree in instruction in May of 2019. Nate has been teaching at ILS since 2001. Currently he teaches 8th grade Language Arts and physical education for grades 7-12. He serves as the schools' activities director and is the head coach of the boys varsity basketball program.

When asked what he enjoys the most about teaching, he said, "bringing the Gospel to people who may be hearing it for the first time and watching them grow in their connection to Christ."

When Nate is not at school he enjoys camping with his family in the tri-state area and playing golf whenever possible. Nate and his wife, Ginger, have two children, Mollie, and Hannah, both graduates of ILHS.

Mrs. Sandra Knoblock - 25 Years

Mrs. Sandra Knoblock grew up in St. Charles, MI. She graduated from Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. Sandra taught at Illinois Lutheran from 1998 to 2020.

When asked what she enjoyed most about teaching, she said "I love sharing God's word with little people. To be able to see the evidence of faith growing in a child is so amazing and such a privilege."

Sandra enjoys baking, reading and spending time with her family. Mrs. Knoblock and her husband Karl have two grown children: Ben (a 2006 graduate of Michigan Lutheran Seminary) and Malory (a 2007 graduate of Illinois Lutheran High School).



Faculty Anniversaries



Grade School Principal – Mr. Jeffrey Falck - 20 Years

Mr. Jeffrey Falck grew up in Tomah, WI and is the son of retired Pastor Daniel and Judy Falck. After attending Lutheran elementary schools through 8th grade, he attended Luther High School in Onalaska, WI before finishing at Martin Luther Prep School in Prairie du Chien. Jeff received his undergraduate degree in education and social studies from Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. He has also earned a masters degree in educational leadership from Martin Luther College.

Jeff has taught a variety of grade combinations in grades 4-8 at schools in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Colorado. He brings over 18 years of teaching experience and 12 years of administrative experience to Illinois Lutheran and is excited to work with the families of Illinois Lutheran.

Jeff is married to Karena and has four children: Ava, Brady, Ida, and Max. He enjoys music (especially playing the organ for worship) and college football. He also enjoys traveling the country with his family and exploring new places.

Mrs. Rebecca Jahns - 15 Years

Mrs. Rebecca Jahns grew up in Watertown, WI, and attended a Lutheran grade school and high school. She received a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Rebecca worked in sales management for several years before turning to MLC and the public teaching ministry.

Upon graduating, her short term assignments took her to Manitowoc Lutheran High School and St. Peter's, Kekoskee, WI, before spending eleven years at Winnebago Lutheran Academy in Fond du Lac, WI. During that time she met her husband, Jim and was blessed to raise their two children: Eliza and Ethan. She then took a break from teaching to focus more on her family, during which time she worked in sales and marketing. Her passion in teaching includes training students in writing and speaking for school and work environments.



Faculty Retirement



Mrs. Sandra Knoblock

Farewell ILS,

At the end of 2019-2020 school year I retired from teaching and moved to Florida. It's hard for me to believe that it's time to retire. It doesn't seem that long ago that my family and I moved to the Crete area - 1994. We were so grateful to have a Lutheran school for our children, and I enjoyed helping out as a teacher's aide for a few years.

In 1998 I was called to teach preschool. I have so many fond memories teaching those little ones! I loved sharing God's Word, and it was so much fun too! I taught preschool for 11 years. In 2009, I was called to teach first grade. That was a big change but one that has also been a great blessing. I have truly enjoyed sharing God's Word and teaching little people each and every day.

I've lost count as to how many students I have taught in the past 22 years. Many of you have graduated from ILS and some of you even have children of your own. I thank God for your parents who brought you to our school and entrusted me with your care. I feel very blessed to have been able to teach so many of you at ILS.

Saying goodbye is bittersweet. I look forward to spending more time with my kids and grandkids, but I will miss all of you at ILS. You are my family too. Please know that each of you hold a very special place in my heart.

Legacy Celebrations

Bryanna Hybert (Class of 2017) of Crete, IL was one of more than 1,400 current University of Iowa students who participated in the 27th annual student-led Dance Marathon, which raised more than \$1.4 million for pediatric oncology and bone marrow transplant patients and their families treated at University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital.

We would love to share in your celebrations! New marriage, baby, graduation? Share your exciting news with your fellow alumni. We would love to see photos as well! Send them to Mrs. Jessica Bushey at jbushey@ilhs.org.

Legacy Gifts

A gift is given in honor of an alumni or faculty who has entered his or her eternal life or is being recognized for an achievement. If you are interested in giving a gift to Illinois Lutheran, please contact Mr. Duane Vance at dvance@ilhs.org or 708.672.3262, ext. 119.

Did You Know

How can you be an active part of the Illinois Lutheran ministry? We would love to talk to you about how you can be a part of our ministry. Please contact Mr. Duane Vance at dvance@ilhs.org or 708.672.3262, ext. 119. Join the alumni facebook group at **ILHS Alumni Association**.





Illinois Lutheran Schools

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