

Sioux Falls Lutheran School: Vision, Mission, and Values

In a changing and complex world, imagine a place dedicated to helping parents and the church raise children to be like Daniel, like Esther, like Ruth—capable, faithful leaders, even in the face of adversity. Imagine your child having the skills to serve God and the world, with strength of character and purpose, knowing that they are loved and saved by Christ, forgiven by God, and heirs to His Kingdom. Imagine your child World Ready and Faith Secure.

At Sioux Falls Lutheran School we value children, faith, family, community, and the integration of outstanding academic and scriptural training. We partner with parents and church for the development of the whole child, with a Christian worldview.

We value children. We believe that children were created by God to seek His Kingdom and to serve His World with all the gifts He has given them; that parents, school, and church hold these children in trust, to lovingly develop these gifts and make sure they know their Creator. Jesus said “let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Mt. 19:14. We believe in the future of each child as a light of the world and as a member of God’s kingdom. Mt. 5:14,16. Jeremiah 29:11.

We value faith. We believe that worldly knowledge and wisdom are gifts from God, but that they cannot by themselves make our children wise about salvation; that teaching scripture is an integral part of developing the whole child, in body, mind, and spirit; that faith is crucial in the formation of strong character traits of honesty, integrity, courage, self-control, unselfishness, determination, hope, forgiveness, and empathy. We believe that daily exposure to God’s Word and Jesus’ love will help our children develop a Christian worldview that will serve them now and for eternity. Isaiah 7:9b.

We value family. We believe that God gave children to parents in trust, with the primary obligation to raise and train them to know God and to serve in the world. We believe that the school, along with the church, can and should serve as a wonderful support and ally for parents, as a fertile nursery for daily growth through the nurture of well trained, loving, and caring Christian teachers and staff. Pr. 22:6; Dt. 6:4-7; Eph. 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:4-5 & 5:4,8.

We value community. We believe that we can and should support our community, not only through service, but also by developing servant hearts in our children. We believe it is important for our children to learn the value of servant leadership through service projects and church attendance, to cultivate early plantings of next generations of church and community leaders. We believe that the community itself also enhances service learning opportunities for our children, providing a real world context to “love one another,” by caring and advocating for the poor, the less fortunate, and “the least of these.” John 13:34-35; Mt. 25:40.

We value an integrated, extraordinary education and whole child development. We believe that each child deserves an extraordinary education, by teachers highly trained in both secular and Christian education. Our church tradition focuses on strong academic fundamentals, supplemented by scripture and outstanding music, extracurricular programs and even play, geared toward fully developing the mind, body, and spirit of each child. We believe that children should grow strong in character and wisdom. We believe that this integration—of excellence in academics, the arts, sports and scripture—makes our education extraordinary. *“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever.”* Daniel 12:3. *“Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you....”* Prov. 24:14.¹

Our vision is to help raise children to be like Daniel and his three companions, like Esther and Ruth—servant leaders gifted by God and blessed with wisdom, strength, and courage, using their gifts and the fruits of the Spirit, in faith, to touch a troubled world with God’s grace.

Though uprooted from their homes and surrounded by the corruption of the Babylonian royal court, Daniel and his companions—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—studied diligently to learn all the secular knowledge of their day. They then served their captors so well, and yet remained so faithful to the God of their fathers, that they were able to both help their own people and witness to a heathen King, who sang praises to the God of Israel.ⁱⁱ Daniel, particularly, was so courageous, confident in the Lord, prayerful, grateful, humble, and bold in his witness that Ezekiel mentions him, along with Noah and Job, as a man of righteousness.ⁱⁱⁱ Daniel and these three young men anchored their wisdom in the context of their faith in, trust of, and love for their God, for whom they were willing to sacrifice all.^{iv}

Similarly, Esther shows how God can overcome impossible obstacles—through the use of a person with patience, wisdom, self-control, and faith—to accomplish His will. Esther, like Daniel, demonstrates great humility and courage in troubled times, risking her own life to boldly stand up for her faith and save her people.^v Esther’s intervention preserved the Old Testament people in the Persian Empire—a people through which the Messiah would come.^{vi}

Ruth serves as the gold standard for love, sacrifice, and loyalty through faith. “Ruth’s kindness and selfless loyalty toward Naomi, and her faith in Naomi’s God, have long endeared her to the faithful” and reflected God’s praise “for his merciful choice of one so unexpected.”^{vii} Ruth left her Moabite family to serve Naomi in a different land. This Gentile, through God’s grace, would become the great grandmother of King David and an ancestor of Jesus.^{viii} The book of Ruth is also a classic example of how community and family can reciprocally care for and protect God’s people. The people of Israel cared for Ruth, as Ruth cared for Naomi. Like Daniel and Esther, Ruth was wise in her approach and cross-cultural in her outreach, grounded in faith, and faithful in difficulty. Like Esther, Ruth exhibited the fruits of the Spirit.

This vision is one not limited to these servant leaders: the Bible is filled with such biographies, stories that are important for children to study and absorb, including, of course the study of the greatest life, the life of Jesus the Christ. Without diverting our eyes from Jesus, we see these lives as examples of ordinary people willing to learn, strong in character and steadfast in faith. Therefore, our vision is to help raise children to be like Daniel and his companions, like Esther and Ruth—servant leaders gifted by God and blessed with wisdom, strength, and courage, using their gifts and the fruits of the Spirit, in faith, to touch a troubled world with God’s grace.

Our mission is: Developing Capable Christian Servant-Leaders, in a Complex World: *World Ready, Faith Secure*.

ⁱ All scriptural references are taken from the Concordia Self-Study Bible, New International Version, Concordia Publishing House (CPH), 1986.

ⁱⁱ Daniel 2:47; 4:34,35; 6:25-27. **Daniel**, *People’s Bible Commentary*, Jeske: CPH, revised edition, 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ezekiel 14:13,14,19,20.

^{iv} “Daniel and the Three Young Men” are commemorated for their faithfulness in the Calendar of Saints, December 17th, biography: <http://worship.lcms.org/LHP/Commenorations/CommBios.htm>

^v “I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.” Esther 4:16.

^{vi} Esther is commemorated as a matriarch in the Calendar of Saints, May 24th biography: <http://worship.lcms.org/LHP/Commenorations/CommBios.htm>

^{vii} Ruth is also commemorated as a matriarch in the Calendar of Saints, July 16th biography: <http://worship.lcms.org/LHP/Commenorations/CommBios.htm>

^{viii} Ruth 4:17; Mt. 1:5.