

**Our Shepherd Lutheran School**  
*A Private Christian Based Elementary School*  
*Grades 1- 4 Curriculum*  
*Serving Avon & Greater Indianapolis, Indiana*

The Lower Elementary School operates in a structured yet creative environment that allows children to express their unique gifts and talents. Children are given the opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and intellectually. Each student is nurtured so that he/she is able to develop positive and productive work habits that will last a lifetime. Academic excellence is stressed throughout the Lower School.

Religion

Religion is not simply a separate class, but is totally incorporated into all areas of the curriculum. Religion class is held daily focusing on Bible stories leading to concepts of redemption and forgiveness. These stories always stress that the only way of salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ. Incorporated into the Religion curriculum is memory work based on Bible passages and the six chief parts of Martin Luther's Small Catechism. Memory work is a skill that is valuable in all areas, but especially in Biblical literacy. Chapel is celebrated each Wednesday and children are given the opportunity to lead chapel along with their class at least once each year.

Language Arts

Developing a student's love for written language is a major emphasis at Our Shepherd Lutheran School. A lifelong learner begins with the ability to read and write. In the Lower School reading and writing is done through a balanced literacy program. Student's writing includes journals, stories, poetry, book reports, and report writing. The writing process, including drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, and publishing, is used throughout the Lower School. Oral presentation is required of all students through show and tell, chapel presentations, and reports to the class. In addition, separate textbooks are used for spelling, handwriting and vocabulary.

Through the use of anthologies in the Scott Foresman reading program, students spend time each day reading with a different emphasis for each grade. Trade books and chapter books are integrated into the language arts program. Teachers work to refine decoding skills, increase fluency, and develop comprehension strategies. Through class discussion, written work, and projects, students develop appreciation and the understanding of a variety of genres. Students read short stories, fiction, poetry, fables, folk tales, nonfiction, biographies, and plays.

Independent reading is an important part of the Lower School's curriculum. Time is given daily for silent reading. The Accelerated Reader program encourages even more independent reading. The goal is to produce lifelong readers.

### Mathematics

The Mathematics curriculum in the Lower Elementary School is based on the skills taught through *Math* (Harcourt). The grade level text teaches students math through the use of projects, manipulatives, problem-solving, investigation and critical thinking skills. Through regular assessment, including Math Fact speed drills, teachers are able to determine the needs of the students. Math is taught daily to all Lower School students.

### Science

The Science program in the Lower School helps teach and develop methods for the young scientists to answer many questions about the wonders of God's creation. The students observe, explore, discuss, reason, graph and document their findings. Experimentation and field trips are used to help students learn first hand about the earth and biological sciences. The text is Science by Scott Foresman which includes many other activities and leveled readers to expand learning.

Fourth grade begins studying Life Science- how to classify plants and animals, ecosystems, and systems of the body. Students slowly move into Earth science and begin to learn how weather, water, minerals, and rocks all affect our environment. Next, they move into the study of Physical Science. Students learn how sound and light move, how force affects objects, and what makes machines work. Finally, students investigate a world beyond our own- the Solar System!

### Social Studies

In the Lower School, children learn about their community and its institutions. The students explore similarities and differences between different communities close to home and around the world. Discussions, writing, questioning, research, and field trips are used to increase the student's understanding of concepts taught at each grade level. Many Social Studies' activities are integrated into the language arts program, as well. Grade 4 Social Studies centers on Indiana history and the regions of our country. They examine Indiana's rise to statehood using the Scott Forsman Text. Field trips to the State Historical Society and Pittsboro's one room schoolhouse are highlights of the program.

**Our Shepherd Lutheran School, a private Christian school based in Avon, Indiana that serves the needs of children in Greater Indianapolis. For more information please call 317-271-9100.**