

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amanda Wilson Named 2025 LEA Outstanding New Lutheran Early Childhood Teacher

Amanda Wilson was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2025 Outstanding New Lutheran Early Childhood Teacher Award. She is in her third year of teaching at Zion Lutheran School in Bensenville, Ill., where she teaches first, second, and third grade.

Ms. Wilson earned a LTE in elementary education from Concordia University Chicago. Ministry experiences that helped shape Amanda include organizing a fundraising campaign that raised several thousand dollars to support a mission trip to Poland, where she had the opportunity to teach 4-5 year-olds about Jesus and the English language. At Concordia Chicago, she was actively involved in a Christian youth ministry team each year eventually serving as the team leader, overseeing the planning of devotions, organizing lock-ins, and preparing games, which allowed her to further develop her leadership and ministry skills.

Amanda has found joy in her teaching. She said, "I take great satisfaction in observing students independently solve problems and make discoveries. I strive to equip them with the necessary tools and present them with challenges, allowing them to navigate and resolve issues on their own. When students independently identify patterns or successfully sound out a word, it validates the effort and preparation that went into their learning process.

Ms. Wilson has not escaped challenges. "One of the challenges I face as a Lutheran educator is witnessing students leave our school for reasons that are not aligned with the mission of Lutheran education. During my time at Zion, I have had the privilege of teaching students with learning disabilities, and it is disheartening when they are unable to continue their education at our school due to the lack of specialized support services. I deeply wish that we had the resources and opportunities to better support these students, enabling them to continue their faith-based education and development within our community."

Amanda's nominator, said, "Ms. Wilson is an exceptional teacher. She is effective in her instruction and skilled at classroom management. Ms. Wilson utilizes academic games, teamwork, and a touch of silliness to help her students focus. She also motivates her students by awarding them points for good behavior and work completion so that they can earn prizes from the treasure box. The children in her classroom benefit from her calm personality and successful classroom management. Above all, I appreciate her dedication to the faith and teaching the children about Jesus."

One colleague said, "I love how well organized and creative her lesson plans are. She uses a variety of resources in her curriculum to keep her students engaged and focused during each lesson. Her students are excited to learn in her class and are encouraged to be creative, to try new things and to not be afraid to make mistakes. Her students are also passionate about learning about the Lutheran faith and are excited to worship Jesus together."

Amanda's personal mission statement is "to nurture and guide students in their academic and social-emotional growth, with Christ at the center. I am committed to creating a supportive environment where each student is encouraged to develop their full potential, both in knowledge and in character. By integrating faith, compassion, and learning, I strive to inspire students to grow in their gifts and become individuals who serve others and make a positive impact in the world."

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