

Welcome to 8th grade at Grace Lutheran School! As the graduating class of 2020, you are on top of the pack, the leaders of the student body! While this is an exciting position to have, with it comes great responsibility, as the eyes of the younger children will be on you, watching how you treat others, act in the halls, and behave at school functions. Whether they admit it, they'll strive to be just like you!

How do you live up to these expectations? John 15:5 teaches: *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."* At Grace Lutheran School, we are Connected to Christ and Connected to Community. It is my prayer that you will grow in your connection to Jesus, that He may continue to perfect your faith and strengthen your leadership abilities as you connect with others.

Most importantly, connect to Christ as you study and memorize the Scriptures in Religion class and Middle School Bible Study, and as you praise Him during Chapel and Middle School devotions. Then, with Christ's help, strive to make authentic connections with your fellow members of the Grace student body! Connect to the Grace community through our Chapel Buddies program, where you'll be paired with four-year-old students for chapel and other buddy-bonding activities. Build relationships through after-school clubs such as Russian Club and Cooking Club. Learn teamwork through playing on our golf, volleyball, soccer, cross-country, basketball, cheer, and track teams. Build relationships on [class trips](#). Parents, I'd encourage you to get involved, too! Connect to our community through cheering on our sports teams together, chaperoning field trips, worshipping at chapel, and more!

Grace graduates connect to area high schools, arriving 100-percent prepared for the transition to high school. While at Grace, you will develop study skills, note-taking skills, writing skills, and a well-rounded academic foundation that will allow you to succeed at the next level at the school of your choosing. You may also trust that as your homeroom teacher, I am cheering for you and your families along this journey! I am ready and willing to guide you as you learn and grow, clearing roadblocks and soothing sore spirits. For those who are new this year, it may take a little while for you to trust that I care about you and your success. To help begin the process of relationship-building between us, allow me to introduce myself more fully.

I grew up in the suburbs of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where my younger sister and I were raised by Christian parents. I assisted in teaching Sunday School, and participated in youth group and mission trips. I attended a private academic preparatory high school, where I enjoyed the small, family atmosphere and academically-competitive student body. My collegiate educational background includes a degree in Journalism from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and a teaching certification in secondary English from Carroll University. I completed a teacher colloquy program through Concordia – Mequon in 2013. I hold teaching licenses in both Wisconsin and Florida.

I love teaching middle schoolers because they bring energy to the classroom. This is my third year as 8th-grade Homeroom Teacher at Grace. I teach 8th Religion, 7th and 8th Language Arts, and 7th and 8th Social Studies. I have been teaching middle and high school since 2004 (with an intermission for raising my own children, James and Helena, who are students in the sixth and seventh grades at Grace). I am passionate about helping young people become strong communicators and informed, critical thinkers. Our endeavors this year will prepare you for the rigors of the high school curriculum and beyond, so that you will be competent and respected in whichever career path the Lord leads you.

As I seek to teach children, I am always mindful that I am praying for the Lord to teach me, too. *"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long"* (Psalm 25:4-5). May God bless us as we encourage each other to stay Connected this school year!