

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19, 2021

Samuel Gmirek named 2021 LEA Outstanding New Lutheran Middle School Teacher

Samuel Gmirek was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2021 Outstanding New Lutheran Middle School Teacher Award. He is in his first year of teaching grades 6–8 at Epiphany Lutheran School in Houston, Texas.

Samuel teaches English language arts, American history, and religion. He also advises the yearbook/media class, coaches track and field, assists with the Esport's team, and serves as adviser for Epiphany's Lutheran Junior Honor Association.

Mr. Gmirek graduated *summa cum laude* with a degree in secondary education and a Lutheran Teacher Diploma from Concordia University Wisconsin. He was on the dean's list each semester and also holds an Eagle Scout award.

Samuel says "My joy in working with students comes from watching them grow as scholars and children of God. Being able to witness 'lightbulb moments' for students affirms my passion for education as an art and science."

Mr. Gmirek also considers education a challenging task. "Caring for the mental, physical, and emotional development of students is an unparalleled responsibility. However, working as an educator at a Lutheran institution, I have the additional responsibility to foster and care for the spiritual growth of students."

Samuel was nominated by his principal, who said, "Students look forward to being in his class and respond positively to his variety of teaching methods. He truly goes out of his way to get to know and interact with students."

Samuel's personal mission statement, based on Matthew 14:16, is "to give students the social, emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual support they need to the best of my God-given ability on a daily basis. No matter how they come to me, it is my duty to love them as Christ has loved and continues to love me as they develop into the individuals God made them to be."

###

Edward Grube
Director of Communications
Lutheran Education Association, River Forest, Ill.
708.209.3343

