

Volunteering at your Emmaus Lutheran School is a great way to build relationships with school personnel, keep an eye on things, and raise your child's profile in a positive way. It can also be hard to fit into your already overloaded life. Even if your daytime availability is limited, you can still gain some of the benefits of volunteering. Try one of these seven ways to make a contribution.

1. Try Job-Sharing

Maybe you can't spare a morning or afternoon every week to, say, work in the library or help out in your child's classroom. But if you can arrange for the time once a month, see if you can split a volunteer job up with another parent or parents on a tight schedule. A little time helping out, seeing and being seen, is better than none.

2. Be a Class Parent

Often, this job consists mostly of making phone calls to warn of school closures or to gather donations for class parties -- things you can do at home, on your time, while still being recognized as a helpful parent. If there are responsibilities you can't fulfill, try splitting the job with another parent who can, someone who's happy to give up the phone-calling part of the job.

3. Look for Evening and Weekend Activities

Emmaus Lutheran will have some activities outside school hours that require parental assistance -- Trunk or Treat, Open House Representatives, refreshments to be served, enrichment programs to be taught. Additionally, there may be once-a-year activities like field day or field trips that you could make yourself available for. Keep your ears open.

4. Find a Long-Range Project

Once a year Emmaus has a big fundraiser for a specific goal. Those are high-profile projects that often require evening meetings and extensive at-home work but not a lot of school-hours participation. Yearbooks are a particularly good thing to get involved in, since you can make sure your special child and classmates are well-represented. This year Emmaus will be hosting a Casino Night, on Saturday March 3, 2012. We will be forming committees to decorate, right donation letters, gather donations and sell tickets. If you would like to be a big part or little part in that event, please contact Greg Rehberg @ grehberg@emmauslutheranfw.org.

5. Go to PTL Meetings

They're not the most fun way to spend an evening, but PTL meetings are good ways to find out what's going on in your child's school, and meet administrators in a non-adversarial context. They're also a great way to find out about volunteer possibilities in the four categories above that often don't get broadcast to the general parent population. Miss Martin is in charge of PTL, if you would like to help out in any way, please email her at mmartin@emmauslutheranfw.org.

6. Attend Special Events

If you can't take time away from your child to volunteer in the evenings, then just attend the events with your child. Bringing your child to a school play or game or family sports night makes both of you more a part of the school community, and can allow you some informal contact with school personnel. It's good to see and be seen.

7. Be a Benefactor

Here's an opportunity that takes none of your time, just some of your money: Ask your child's teacher if there's something needed for the classroom that you can donate. Teachers often spend their own money on classroom essentials, and you can earn some good-parent points by helping out. Other possibilities include donating equipment to Emmaus, books to the school library, or money to a scholarship fund.

The Faculty and Staff at Emmaus thank you for your interest in helping our school in whatever way the Lord moves you. All volunteers are a blessing to our school and church, no matter how big or small. Thanks a Bunch!! Please contact the school at 459-7722 to volunteer.

