



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Marion Author's First Book to Benefit LSSI's Storybook Project**

Part of the proceeds from the first book written by Mabel Ditch Hayes of Marion will help support the Storybook Project, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) that connects children and their incarcerated parents through books.

Hayes, former director of the Adult and Family Literacy Program at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois, has written a whimsical children's picture book – "Daddy, I'll Bake You a Chocolate Cake" – about an animal-loving little girl and her indulgent father. Written for preschoolers, the book helps children to learn to count to ten, and its rhymes encourage them to "read" along. The book is illustrated by Nicole Bateman, one of Hayes' students. Hayes will be showcasing her book at an April 28 book fair at the John A Logan Early Learning Collaboration Book Fair in Carterville and will be reading it during a story hour on April 21 at the DuQuoin Public Library.

Hayes says she always wanted to write children's books. While still in high school, she received her first rejection letter from a publisher – in this case from *Humpty Dumpty* magazine. She sees literacy programs that encourage reading as "such a good way for bonding between parent and child." She also uses children's books to help teach adults to read English.

Hayes has a bachelor's degree in English education from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIU-C) and has completed work toward a master's degree at the University of Missouri and SIU-C. She taught at Johnston City High School and at Unity Christian School in Herrin before going to work for John A. Logan College, initially as its assistant literacy coordinator at the Family Learning Center. Currently, she is a grant writer for the college and also works with its developmental educational program.

Hayes, a member of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Marion, is also a member of LSSI's Southern Illinois Advancement Council, which looks for ways to financially support and promote

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awareness of the agency’s programs.

“She’s just a huge supporter of LSSI – [giving of her] time and resources,” says Kay Rothschild, LSSI’s director of annual giving in southern Illinois, about Hayes.

The Storybook Project is a part of LSSI’s Prisoner and Family Ministry (PFM) that seeks to maintain a connection between incarcerated parents and their children. Assisted by LSSI volunteers, incarcerated parents choose children’s books and read them into tape recorders. The books and tapes are then sent to their children. Through this and other PFM programs, LSSI touches the lives of approximately 3,000 children each year.

Both Hayes and her husband Curtis are volunteers for the Storybook Project. “Storybook and *Building Homes: Rebuilding Lives* [a program that enables inmates to help build homes for low-income families] are both very impressive programs,” Hayes said. “The feedback that we have received from incarcerated parents and grandparents [shows that] this is another avenue of bringing wholeness to broken families. I am very impressed with the way LSSI carries out its mission,” she adds.

“Daddy, I’ll Bake You a Chocolate Cake” is available from [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com), [www.Trafford.com](http://www.Trafford.com) or directly from Hayes. Contact her at [taught2read@yahoo.com](mailto:taught2read@yahoo.com) or 1-800-457-1609. Cost is \$12.75 plus shipping.

Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with more than 89 program locations. In southern Illinois, LSSI provides counseling, adoption and foster care services, Intact Family services, pregnancy counseling and adoption preservation, and services for prisoners and their families. For more information, go online to [www.LSSI.org](http://www.LSSI.org) or call 618/997-9196.

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