



HIGHLIGHTS

*~ Thanksgiving Issue ~
November 2016*



*And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth
kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise,
and knowledge to them that know understanding:*

- Daniel 2:21

TEACHERS' CONVENTION 2016

Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

On October 20 & 21, the 62nd Protestant Reformed Teachers' Convention was hosted by the Protestant Reformed grade school and high school in Dyer, Indiana. For some teachers this location meant many miles of travel; while for others, it was a kind of homecoming. (Miss Mikal Dykshorn's parents' house is within viewing distance of the school.) I would estimate that about 150 teachers, from many states across the USA and two provinces in Canada, attended this year's convention.

The planning of the Teachers' Convention each year is one of the ways which the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute (PRTI) seeks to fulfill its stated purpose. The PRTI is an organization of Protestant Reformed teachers (not the School Boards – that is the Federation of Protestant Reformed Schools) which has been in existence since 1956. According to its constitution, the PRTI has a three-fold purpose:

1. *To study materials related to the field of education in conjunction with the Word of God in order that we teachers may be better qualified to teach from a Protestant Reformed viewpoint.*
2. *To create a medium through which we may produce materials of a specific Protestant Reformed nature to be used in our own schools and thereby making our schools more distinctive.*
3. *To create a means through which we teachers may work towards more unity and understanding between our Protestant Reformed Schools.*

Risking the danger of over-simplification, I would say that most of the sectional presentations at the convention can be divided into two categories. The first category is the type of sectional that emphasizes the method of teaching. A few examples of sectional presentations at this year's convention which fall into this category included sectionals titled:

- "A Few Fun Review Activities for your Classroom"
- "The Flipped Classroom"
- "Writing and Composition – Writing Across the Curriculum"
- "From Classroom to Gym: Activities to Improve Academics"
- "The Teaching Methods of Jesus"
- "Memory Improvement"

The second category are sectionals which focus more on teaching from a distinctly Protestant Reformed viewpoint. A short list of these sectionals were titled:

- "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God"
- "Just Men Made Perfect"
- "Teaching – Is it a Calling or a Job?"
- "The Teacher as Counselor – Helping Hurting Kids"
- "Beginnings of Reformed, Parental, and Covenantal Schools in Chicago"

I can't resist mentioning a couple other sectional titles. One was "Avoiding Burnout". I am told this sectional was packed. What does that indicate??? Another was, "Learning from Traveling: Iceland". This was a fascinating travelogue of pictures and I am sure a favorite sectional of Mr. Bos, who himself brings into his classroom the learning gleaned from his own travels over the years.

Every convention I have attended begins with a keynote address based on the theme of the convention. This year was no exception. Rev. Mahtani spoke on the theme, "God: Above All, Through All, and In All", based on Ephesians 4:4-6. Rev. Mahtani explained that this theme states the reason and basis of all unity in the Church of Jesus Christ. In the first half of this address, Rev.

Mahtani developed this idea theologically. In the second half of his address he applied this to the teacher's relationship to three groups of people – parents, fellow teachers, and the children. Teachers are un-ordained ministers (servants) of the parents and children of the church. We have the duty and many opportunities to promote and strengthen this unity which is ours in Jesus Christ. Rev. Mahtani then encouraged each of us to be personally united to God in order to be equipped to promote and guard unity in our work with fellow saints.

This year's convention like so many in the past was a valuable experience. The beauty of the fall colors made the travels enjoyable, the fellowship with like-minded Protestant Reformed teachers was uplifting, the sectionals and keynote were inspiring, and the food abundant and delicious. Thanks Dyer folks for your hospitality.

Let me end with an anecdote. During one of the sessions I sat next to a fellow teacher whom I went to school with. He looked around and said, "I think this is the first convention we have been to where none of our former teachers are present." He was right. We are part of a second generation of teachers. But looking around, there were many teachers whom we taught, and we are now teaching the children of many of the parents who were formerly our students. What an evidence of the blessing of God's covenant promises in the line of generations and evidence of the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ. Of course, it also made us realize our age and made us wonder what all those younger teachers say and think of us. I hope they see that there is no burnout here yet! The fires still feel like they are burning hot.

FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Dick Kuiper, Chairman
Aaron Cleveland, Jeff Kalsbeek, Joel Langerak

*"I will praise the name of God with a song,
and will magnify him with thanksgiving."
Ps. 69:30*

Under God's guidance and blessing another year of covenant, Christian education is well under way here at Hope School. On a rotating basis two members of the Board visit several classrooms each month. Also, our Administrator visits each classroom several times each year. From the reports of the Board members each month, and from the reports that our Administrator shares with our committee periodically, it is evident that we have much to be thankful for. God has blessed Hope School with teachers who take seriously their calling to help us as parents to rear our children in the fear of His name.

The Board encourages our teachers to enroll in continuing education courses, seminars, and workshops that will aid them in

their classroom teaching. Mrs. Stephanie Daling recently attended a science conference at Grand Valley State University and Mrs. Deb Hoeksema plans to attend a 3-credit course at GVSU which is a requirement for the program she is enrolled in to obtain a Master's Degree. Also, all of our teachers have been encouraged to attend the upcoming Federation sponsored *History and Principles of Reformed Education* class led by Prof. Dykstra.

Our Robotics teams are off to a good start this year. By the time you read this report the third annual RoBowl will be in the history books. This tournament was expanded this year to include teams from Adams, Eastside, Faith (Randolph), Heritage, and Hope. We again want to thank our mentors for the time and expertise they put into this endeavor, and also want to thank the School Circle for providing funding for our Robotics teams again this year.

One of the responsibilities of the Education Committee is to approve all band and choir music. We encourage all parents,

grandparents, and friends of Hope School to attend the upcoming all-school program which is scheduled for Friday, December 2, at the Grandville High School Auditorium, and the combined band/choir program which is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, at the Grandville Middle School Auditorium.

The Technology Committee is one of the sub-committees of the Education Committee. Some of the highlights of the work of this committee are the following: all staff computers have been upgraded to *MS Office 2013* or higher, the transition to *Windows 10*

is complete, new Dell desktops have been installed in the 1st, 2nd, 6th, and 8th grade classrooms, and the students are making good use of the newly purchased Chromebooks.

We realize that all of our labors as a committee and as a Board are in vain without God's blessing on our work. Please remember us in your prayers as we carry out our work on behalf of the parents and Society of Hope School. Pray too that God will use the instruction carried out here for the good of our covenant children and for the glory of His name.



FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Steve Lotterman, Chairman

Dan Boeve, Andy Bylsma, Jon Rutgers

The Finance Committee is again thankful for this opportunity to report on the financial status of Hope School. The financial statement included for your review shows our income and expenses for the first four months of our fiscal year. We are happy to report that most of the line items are right in line with our approved budget amounts. With over a million dollars in the annual budget, careful review of finances is prudent and reflective of good stewardship, and the Finance Committee and School Board keep a close eye on each of these categories from month to month. Some items may appear to be over budget, but this is because they are actually one time payments that are transferred from our main account into their respective funds. For instance, Educational Supplies and Books is a separate fund, and the majority of this society approved amount is transferred into that fund the 1st month of our fiscal year.

Of special note is the Building Mortgage Payment. Near the conclusion of the last fiscal year, through the charitable giving of our constituents, we had a projected surplus of over \$45,000.00. The decision was made that an extra \$40,000.00 payment would be made towards the principal on our mortgage. With that assistance, we were able to pay off our mortgage only 4 months into this fiscal year, and we are happy to report that as of October 5, 2016, Hope School is debt free!

The Finance Committee continues to send out monthly e-mailed Tuition Statements, to help you verify we have received your payment, and that you are staying on schedule. Please contact the treasurer if you have not received a statement, and we can verify that we have the correct e mail address. We also would like to remind the parents of our tuition policy. After the initial enrollment payment in July, we expect a payment each month, from September through May. If this pattern is followed, all tuition is paid in full by June 1. We also would like to inform you of the School Board's policy regarding delinquent accounts. Please refer to the Handbook for Parents and Students (Revised Edition - September 2012). Page 3, Enrollment Rules and Procedures, Tuition Payment, C and D: "Children of parents whose tuition payments are not current at the end of December will not be allowed to begin the second semester. Parents who are unable to meet these requirements are to notify the treasurer, or the parents may present their case to the Board."

As we reflect on the abundance of God's goodness to us during this season, please continue to show our gratitude by supporting the school with your gifts and prayers.

**HOPE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
INCOME STATEMENT
JULY - OCTOBER 2016**

	YEAR TO DATE	PERCENT TO BUDGET 4/12 - 33%	ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME			
CHURCH COLLECTIONS	13,194.32	0.28	47,000.00
GIFTS & PLEDGES	58,907.00	0.21	275,000.00
HOPE FOUNDATION	9,000.00	0.50	18,000.00
GYM RENTAL	-	-	4,600.00
SPECIAL ED SOCIETY	-	-	7,750.00
TUITION	285,400.84	0.40	713,580.00
BUS FEES	11,616.60	0.40	28,800.00
MISCELLANEOUS	200.00	-	-
TOTAL INCOME:	378,318.76	0.35	1,094,730.00

GENERAL EXPENSES			
ACCOUNTING FEES	1,200.00	0.34	3,540.00
BAND EXPENSE	2,000.00	1.00	2,000.00
CLASS TRIP FUND	2,500.00	1.00	2,500.00
EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES AND BOOKS	15,800.00	0.69	22,800.00
BUILDING AND GROUNDS FUND	8,333.32	0.33	25,000.00
ELIM CHRISTIAN SERVICES	-	-	1,350.00
FEDERATION DUES	-	-	1,000.00
INSURANCE, GENERAL	2,342.25	0.25	9,350.00
INSURANCE, GROUP	29,553.15	0.30	100,115.00
INSURANCE, WORKERS COMP	797.00	0.26	3,100.00
INSURANCE, HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT	1,333.32	0.33	4,000.00
JANITORIAL SUPPLIES	1,546.92	0.39	4,000.00
LIBRARY FUND	1,000.00	1.00	1,000.00
MISCELLANEOUS	79.31	0.03	2,500.00
BUILDING MORTGAGE PAYMENT	34,201.10	0.46	75,000.00
LONG RANGE BUILDING FUND	5,485.00	0.33	16,455.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES	226.75	0.19	1,200.00
PAYROLL, ART TEACHER	-	-	2,000.00
PAYROLL, BAND	1,234.00	0.17	7,400.00
PAYROLL, BUILDING MAINTENANCE	657.00	0.47	1,400.00
PAYROLL, CHOIR	828.52	0.17	4,975.00
PAYROLL, DISCOVERY ROOM	10,342.64	0.23	45,600.00
PAYROLL, JANITOR	9,500.80	0.33	28,500.00
PAYROLL, LAWN MAINTENANCE	1,352.31	0.75	1,800.00
PAYROLL, LIBRARIAN	801.11	0.19	4,265.00
PAYROLL, OFFICE	8,033.25	0.31	26,000.00
PAYROLL, SUBSTITUTE TEACHER	-	-	2,000.00
PAYROLL, TEACHER	153,033.88	0.33	464,100.00
PAYROLL, TEACHER AIDE	2,582.41	0.29	9,000.00
PAYROLL, TECHNOLOGY MAINTENANCE	880.00	0.25	3,500.00
PAYROLL TAXES	13,373.37	0.29	46,000.00
RETIREMENT PLAN	4,035.07	0.26	15,300.00
PHYS ED UNIFORMS	623.25	0.69	900.00
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	7,125.65	0.79	9,000.00
SNOW REMOVAL	-	-	3,000.00
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT	946.67	0.95	1,000.00
TEACHER CLASSROOM FUND	2,800.00	1.00	2,800.00
TECHNOLOGY SUPPLIES	5,000.00	1.00	5,000.00
UTILITIES, ELECTRIC	5,318.56	0.28	19,000.00
UTILITIES, GAS	174.59	0.01	13,000.00
UTILITIES, TELEPHONE	559.70	0.35	1,600.00
UTILITIES, TRASH	715.42	0.42	1,700.00
UTILITIES, WATER & SEWER	509.37	0.34	1,500.00
CONTINGENCY	-	-	5,000.00
TOTAL GENERAL EXPENSES:	336,825.69	0.34	1,000,250.00

BUS EXPENSES			
BUS DEPRECIATION FUND	8,900.00	0.33	26,700.00
BUS DRIVER COST SUBSIDY	831.69	0.55	1,500.00
BUS DRIVER PAYROLL	6,623.00	0.21	31,000.00
BUS DRIVER PAYROLL TAXES	500.00	0.21	2,330.00
BUS DRIVER WORKER'S COMP	-	-	1,000.00
BUS INSURANCE	736.00	0.25	3,000.00
BUS REPAIR	1,525.24	0.12	12,700.00
GAS AND OIL	1,938.99	0.13	15,000.00
TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR	625.00	0.50	1,250.00
TOTAL BUS EXPENSES:	21,679.92	0.23	94,480.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	358,505.61	0.33	1,094,730.00
GAIN OR (LOSS):	19,813.15		

FOUNDATION REPORT

Mr. Rich DeMeester, Secretary

As another year draws to a close, we think on God's covenant faithfulness to us and our children. What a blessing to have our own good Protestant Reformed Christian schools to send our children to unhindered, for a time, by the laws of this country and by those who seek to oppose God's cause. Thanks be to God for our schools and also the financial means to support them.

The Foundation Board has been busy once again this past year planning events to raise funds for Hope School. These events have been successful this past year. We have raised enough to be able to give an \$18,000 gift to the school. We put on three events this year—a travelogue in March, the fourth annual sporting clay tournament in May and a bass fishing tournament in August. It is the hope of the Foundation that these events are enjoyable for our supporters and that we can raise funds for our school through them, but also that we raise awareness of the Foundation. We ask that

you remember the Foundation in your estate planning. Estate gifts are an important part of the Foundation.

The events that we have held this year have continued to grow, so we as a Foundation plan to host the same events this coming year. This year, we look forward to a travelogue put on by Nick Kleyn and Derek Bleyenbergh on their trip to the Netherlands. The fifth annual sporting clay tournament is scheduled for May 6 at Kent Conservation Club. We plan on holding the fishing tournament in August again.

The Foundation's portfolio continues to see growth and is now valued at just under \$475,000. We thank Royal Securities for assisting us again this year in the management of our portfolio.

We thank God for his provision for us and pray for the wisdom to be faithful stewards of the gifts we have been given and that all of them may be used to His honor and glory.

FEDERATION/CIRCLE CONTACT/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Aaron Cleveland, Chairman

Joel Langerak, Dan Schipper

As the title of our committee indicates, we are responsible for three areas of labor on the School Board. First, our Federation responsibilities involve attending the spring and fall delegate meetings of the Federation of Protestant Reformed School Societies. This is more than a mere formality. Committee member Joel Langerak is President of the Federation, and member of the TED Committee, which recently brought a significant proposal to the fall delegate meeting. Both Grand Rapids area and western delegates (northwest Iowa, Chicago, Redlands, etc.) overwhelmingly approved *"the formation of a committee tasked with the work of further research and development of a formal teacher training program and (pending Federation delegate approval) the work of establishing and maintaining such a program into the future"* (exact wording of proposal).

While this will be a huge undertaking, we believe it to be an important step in the right direction. Two more sections of the proposal are worth quoting to underscore the importance of this decision. *"A properly trained teaching staff is an essential component of schools who find their existence tied to a distinctively Reformed educational philosophy and practice. It is imperative that Protestant Reformed schools make sure there is distinctive Protestant Reformed training for Protestant Reformed teachers who do this work."* Further we read, *"Today, there still exists no **thorough training**... which will equip a young person or existing teacher in the distinctives of a Protestant Reformed*

education. *Secular colleges certainly do not, nor do the local Christian colleges. The time to provide this training is now lest we lose our distinctiveness.*"

Second, our Circle Contact responsibilities involve remaining in contact with the School Circle and overseeing their work. In September our committee met with the officers of the Circle and discussed a number of items, including how their meetings are conducted, fundraising, their proper place in the operation of Hope School and our desire that our mother are keepers at home. The mothers of the School Circle received our hearty thanks for all that they do to promote the smooth operation of Hope School. Often the little things that go unnoticed are the most important in the workings of the home and school.

Third, our Publicity responsibilities have involved a lot of work on our new website over the past six months. Pictures had to be gathered and sorted. Information had to be gathered from teachers and staff. Copy had to be written. There were several meetings with our website designer, Jordan Hiemstra, of Northbound Studio Design. Hundreds of emails went back and forth. The website was designed, revised and revised again. The finished product was unveiled at the beginning of the school. No doubt this website will be a useful tool for the administration of the school to communicate with parents, students, and supporters. Our goal is to keep the site as fresh and up to date as possible.



STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS



STRUGGLING TO LEARN

Mrs. Deb Kuiper, Discovery Room

We live in a society that expects instant gratification. When we want something, we want it now. Are we too busy to make supper? There's always fast food. No time to read a newspaper? Scan the headlines on your smartphone. We are impatient. We find ourselves grumbling at the microwave (!) if it takes too long.

This desire for instant gratification can be found in the classroom as well. Why should students take the time to study and understand a concept or work out a problem? They would rather have someone or something feed them the answers. Teachers comment that they have scarcely finished giving an assignment and students already have their hands raised or are standing by the teacher's desk wanting assistance.

Jim Stigler, the author of the book, The Teaching Gap, compares teaching methods in the United States, Germany and

Japan. He points out that one striking difference between the schools in the United States and the schools in Japan is Japan's willingness to allow students to struggle with difficult problems. He notes a parallel difference in the perseverance of the students within the framework of that expectation.

He tells the story of a Japanese classroom in which a teacher chose a student who was struggling with his assignment to go to the board and show his work. As an observer in the classroom, Jim expected the child to burst into tears and give up. The child did not give up, but kept working nearly the entire period until he had completed the problem. He then sat down, obviously proud of his work.

He notes an international study in which students were given a difficult mathematical problem and asked to work it out. In Asian schools, the students

continued working on the problem for the entire class period. In the United States, the students tended to work at it for a few minutes, conclude that it was *too hard*, and give up.

He also noted a cultural difference in the way that adults talk to children about learning. In the United States, when children receive good grades their parents tend to say "You're very smart". In Japan, when children do well, their parents are more likely to say, "You worked very hard". A small difference in language, but one that reveals an important difference in how the parents view the process that children go through to succeed.

"I think that from very early ages we [in America] see struggle as an indicator that you're just not very smart," Stigler says. "It's a sign of low ability — people who are smart don't struggle, they just naturally get it, that's our folk theory. Whereas in Asian cultures they tend to see struggle more as an opportunity."

"In Eastern cultures," Stigler says, "it's just assumed that struggle is a predictable part of the learning process. Everyone is expected to struggle in the process of learning, and so struggling becomes a chance to show that you, the student, have what it takes emotionally to resolve the problem by persisting through that struggle."

The idea here is that if we see struggle as a lack of intelligence or a sign of weakness, we do not want to endure it. If instead we see a struggle as a sign of strength and endurance we are more likely to persevere.

What is the benefit of this struggling for the student? Research by Manu Kapur, a researcher at the Learning Sciences Lab at the National Institute of Education of

Singapore, shows that people who struggled to solve problems without having an instructor guide them through every step actually understood the nature of the problem better and were able to apply the skills they learned to other areas.

So how can parents and teachers encourage children to persevere in their learning? In their book, The 10 Commitments: Parenting with Purpose, Chick Moorman and Thomas Haller examine language that enhances independence on the part of children as opposed to language that promotes learned helplessness. They offer suggestions for language to help children learn to work through problems more independently.

Phrases that increase learned helplessness include:

- That's too difficult for you.
- I'll do that for you.
- I'll send the teacher a note.
- Let me pour (get, fix bring, carry, etc.) that. You might drop (spill, break, forget) it.

Phrases that enhance independence and decrease learned helplessness include:

- I'll get the job started and you can finish it.
- Take a chance. See if you can do it.
- I know you can do it.
- Sounds like you have a problem. What solutions have you thought about?
- Let me show you how to do that yourself.

As covenant parents and as Christian school teachers we do well to resist the spirit of the age which seeks easy answers. We ought rather to help students learn to apply themselves to their schoolwork, even when it doesn't come easily, even when it is a struggle.

UNITY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Mrs. Stephanie Daling, 2nd Grade

I Corinthians 12:1-14 begins with Paul addressing the proper understanding and use of the spiritual gifts. This chapter continues by talking about the importance of all the gifts God gives by using the human body as reference. For example, “And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?” The apostle Paul ends the chapter by saying we are all the body of Christ and members of the church and we all carry different gifts that make us unique, yet we are all a part of Christ’s body.

While at the PRTI convention I attended a sectional that dealt with student success and how we as teachers can make unit plans that will help our students succeed. The speaker spoke about five different ways that teachers can make an effective unit:

- o First, clear unit goals: What are your big ideas for the lesson, what concepts do you want your students to remember, how does this unit connect to scripture?
- o Secondly, we must provide individual attention – what are your students’ individual interests, skills, learning abilities? Help them figure out where their deficiencies are in order to help them succeed.
- o Thirdly, have flexible classroom routines. Allow for students’ different paces of learning and whole-class or small-group learning.
- o Fourthly, make sure to use a variety of instructional strategies. A varied instructional diet is good for overall development and keeping students engaged.
- o Finally, make sure your students know that they are partners in their own success. They must learn to take ownership in their learning.

All of these steps are vital for the success of the student – the Christian student, but I would like to focus on step 2 – providing individual attention to our students. I Corinthians 12:4 states, “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” In this verse, Paul is referring to spiritual gifts, but this can also be applied to the gifts God has given us in His grace. Some of our students do very well in math, others in reading. Others are very good artists or can play a certain instrument very well. Some have been given the ability to be good at different sports, whereas others are good at robotics or being a part of a student council. There is indeed a diversity of gifts! Yet, there is only one Giver who works through the diverse gifts.

These gifts are different for each student, but they all came from the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God who works in us through these gifts. As God’s covenant teachers, we must accept the responsibility for our students’ learning. By figuring out each and every one of our students’ interests, skills, needs and learning styles we can help them figure out where their deficiencies are. We cannot assume that all students learn the same way or have the same abilities – and we must accept the fact that just because we feel a lesson went extremely well, not all students understood it. We must take time to talk with and get to know our students. Knowing their needs and understanding that they need different means of teaching at times, helps with all student success and unity within the church.

Not only is it important to get to know each of our students’ interests and gifts, but it is important to make known to our whole student body that we have all been given different abilities. I had a 2nd grade student this year tell me and other classmates that it was “dumb that so-and-so picked basketball as his favorite sport.” This gave me the opportunity to explain to them that we do not like all of the same things. I said, “Imagine if we all liked the color blue

and our favorite food was pizza. How boring our lives would be if there was no diversity among us!" After having this discussion, the student realized that our differences are what make us unique and different – good different.

The apostle Paul tells us that each of these gifts are given for the profit of all. This means these gifts are not given to a particular individual just for his sake, but as a benefit to the whole church body. No one gift is greater than another and we must make this known to our students. Just because one student may be good at math doesn't mean they are better than those who are not as great at math. I Corinthians 12:11 states, "dividing to every man severally as he will." Here is another reason for unity and a reason against any superiority regarding these gifts. These gifts are distributed not according to the will of man, but as GOD WILLS, and many times God's will differs from our wills. We should never assume that the gifts are distributed based on how we would distribute them. Sometimes, our students and even we, as teachers and adults, assume certain gifts are given because a person may be more spiritually mature or closer to God or perhaps God loves this person more than He loves us. The example my students like to use is that some people have more money than others. God must love those who are rich more. This is not the case. We must continually encourage our students to understand that God gives us these gifts based on His divine and most perfect will – all for a particular reason. It's okay to not be good at basketball or perhaps struggle with reading. We've been given some other gift instead!

We need to have a diversity in gifts because that is what makes our church body whole. Unity among believers is not secured by making all believers the same. Unity is secured among the many because all believers are in Christ. Though there is a diversity of gifts by the Spirit, by one Spirit all believers are baptized in ONE body. Paul illustrates the importance of each diverse member for the unity of the one body by drawing attention to the human body. The body needs the foot, the hand, the ear, the eye, and the nose in order to properly function. Each member contributes to the health of the whole, just like each gift we are given contributes to the health of the whole body of Christ – the church. Paul continues to tell us that the purpose of such diversity in gifts among believers is so that there be no divisions in the church. This may seem counterintuitive to us, unless we realize and believe that unity is not uniformity. The sovereign, all-wise God intends diversity for the goal of unity. If all Christians had the same gifts or liked the same things, then the body would not function properly. How important this unity is.

Take this last statement as a reminder to yourselves but also to give to your children or to your students; God graciously gives gifts to each of His children. He sovereignly decides who receives what gift and how many. Often Christians become discouraged because they do not have the same gift as someone else. Others can become proud because of the gifts that they have as though they earned those gifts. God's sovereign giving of gifts should evoke praise and thanksgiving rather than discouragement and pride, and should teach humility because of the gifts granted to us according to God's will. When considering YOUR gift, do so with a God-centered perspective rather than a self-centered one. And remember that all of our children/students have different gifts. Teachers, get to know your students, understand and believe that God has given them all different gifts, and keep this in the forefront of your mind as you continue making lessons and unit plans for your students throughout this school year.



There are many verses in the Bible which show God’s great kindness towards His people and also how we must show kindness and love to one another. The following are just two examples: *“For His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.” Psalm 117:2 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32*

This year, in reading, the second graders have been reading stories that follow a certain theme. We started the year reading stories that were about sharing. Now, we have started a new unit with the theme of kindness.

I felt that it was very important to sit down on the first day of the unit and talk with the students about kindness. We read through different Bible verses and also gave examples of acts of kindness in our own lives. After our discussion of kindness, I asked the students to answer two questions on lined paper:

1. **HOW** can we show kindness to others?
2. **WHY** do we show kindness to others?

Below are a few examples of responses of their responses, just as I received them! 😊

How can we show kindness to others?

If somebody is hirt you help them.
~Nathan DeJong

I let others go first.
~Graham DeMeester

If someone doesn’t have a frend you can play with them.
~Laura Cleveland

I help mom clean the dishis.
~Maci TenBrock

By giving pepl food if they need it.
~Jadon Langerak

I let my brother play with my toy.
~Ava Cleveland

I help my sister pick up her room when she had too.
~Sara DeVries

I can bring the garbage down to the driveway for my mom.
~Olivia VanDenTop

If someone doesn’t have a pencil then you let them share yours.
~Anna DeVries

We can help peple when someone falls.
~Jake Rutgers

You shud be kind if sumone gets hurt.
~Simon Windemuller

You can let somewon cut you in line.
~Wyatt Wassink

You can pick something up for them to be kind.
~Brice Feenstra

When peple are hurt you can help them find a adalt.
~Jenna DeVries

Give money to the poor.
~Chase Kooienga

Why do we show kindness to others?

You wont have ene friends if you don’t be nice to people.
~Xander Peterson

We are kind becuase God was kind to us.
~Alanna Kalsbeek

If you be kind to someoen they will be kind to you.
~Harry Langerak

Becease it is NOT nice to be mean.
~Ely Miersma

To prase God.
~Evan Kleyn

If your mean you probly won’t have friends.
~Malea Moelker

We are kind to people because you want them to be kind to you.

~Micah Kuiper

Because if we were not being kind your not loveing God.

~Kohen Hanko

We should be kind because God wants us to be kind and because we probably won't get any friends if we do not be kind to others.

~Lydia Minderhoud

God says love your naber.

~Darren Kalsbeek

So we can serv GOD.

~Leah Kalsbeek

Beacaus if we are not kind we will not be able to have friends.

~Lydia Price

If we wern't nice we wod not have eny friends.

~Cory VanOostenbrugge

OUR FIELD TRIP - WORTHWHILE?

Mr. Dan Hanko, 4th Grade

My fourth grade class and I recently visited the outdoor Discovery Center in Holland. We spent the day with a guide who presented a program called "Up Close and Wild." This program was the grand finale for the fourth graders' study of vertebrates and invertebrates in their science class. After I returned to school at day's end, I evaluated the trip. Was it worth the time? Did the children learn anything? Did the benefits outweigh the hassles? The answers to these questions about the Outdoor Discovery Center was undoubtedly "Yes." Let me tell you why.

First, the topic interested all my fourth graders and held their attention. What fourth grader does not like animals? The children were able to observe up close the mounted animals on display in the nature center. They had the opportunity to feel the fur of a beaver, a bear, a fox, and an otter. Their eager hands held the live snake, and with interest watched the toad that stalked its meal worm prey. The "hands-on" experience with God's creatures will not soon leave their memories.

Second, this trip was a great review for the material they had just learned and studied. The children were able to answer many of the guide's questions and also ask their own questions to learn more. This class trip at the end of a unit reinforced what they had been taught. It allowed them to explore their own area of interest which time would not allow in the classroom. The carefully planned scavenger hunt made them read the descriptions of animals and generated discussion about certain facts.

Third, the outdoor walk along the trails was a great opportunity to focus the children's attention on things they would likely miss if walking the trails alone or without a guide. A trail to a child is something on which to run in order to reach the end or complete the loop first. I know that boys let loose would be done with yelling and chasing and little regard for any plant life or creature on either side of the trail. The restrained "quiet" walk and teaching opened their eyes to the many different plants God has placed in the fields. Even the study of these plants proved interesting to them. Hopefully a little information will be remembered and passed on to parents and siblings on a future walk.

Finally, the plants and animals revealed to the children God's marvelous design and mighty hand. As the Belgic Confession states in Article 2, the creation "is before our eyes as a most elegant book"; and it leads us "to contemplate the invisible things of God, namely, His

eternal power and divinity.” These things were not uttered by the guide at the nature center but were emphasized before and after the trip. Will these things be the first words out of the children’s mouths when asked about the trip? No, likely not. But they hear these words, and the connections are made. The seeds of information have been sown and have been watered with application from Scripture.

In summary I believe the class trip was enjoyable for all and a useful and worthwhile learning experience. I look forward to the next time I can visit the same nature center and learn more.



The following paragraphs describe the fourth grade class trip several weeks ago. Although each paragraph is about the same class trip, each child wrote with a different emphasis. I think you will enjoy them.

Our Awesome Class Trip

We went to the nature center for our class trip. We went inside and the lady showed us a turtle, a snake, (she let us hold it), and a frog. We saw the frog do an army crawl and eat its prey. Then we did a nature walk and also we played for awhile. Then we went to see the birds of prey. There was an owl that kept flipping on the guide’s hand. Then we had a snack and walked to the bus. ~ Wesley VanDenTop

Dead and Alive- We Saw Them Both

We had a class trip at the Outdoor Discovery Center. It was a lot of fun! First, we had a scavenger hunt inside. We had to find animals and answer questions. We spent the whole morning inside. Then we had lunch. After lunch we went on a hike. We saw a lot of plants and animals. After the hike, we went to a place where people care for birds with permanent injuries. We had to answer some questions, and then we went home. I had a lot of fun on this class trip. ~ David Langerak

Vertebrates and Invertebrates

When we first went to the nature center we had a scavenger hunt. The guide gave us a paper and we went and looked at the animals. We read their signs. After that we got to hold a black rat snake and a frog. It was cool! The second thing we did was go on a hike. On our hike we stopped at a plant called the goldenrod. Flies called gall flies bite their way into the goldenrod stem and live in there until they get to be “older” flies. We also looked at berries that look poisonous but are not. They take like all the moisture out of your mouth. Last, but not least, we saw the “Birds of Prey”. We went to look at animals that were injured in many different ways. Some were hit by cars; some were injured by other animals. All these things I talked about were at the Outdoor Discovery Center. ~ Clair Kalsbeek

Outdoor Discovery Center

Our field trip was very fun. We got to go on a very fun hike. We learned about vertebrates. We also got to go on a scavenger hunt. It was very fun seeing the thirteen elk. I was amazed when we went there and saw God’s mighty hand in the creation. I also learned

that I should not be afraid of snakes! I was amazed also at all of the unfamiliar creatures that God made. After that, we went back to school. ~ Mona DeMeester

Our Trip to the Nature Center

Our class trip was to the Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland. When we first came we saw elk. There were thirteen elk, but I only saw eleven. My favorite elk was the bull. Then we went inside, and we had a scavenger hunt for six animals. (But one was not there.) I saw snakes, frogs, a toad, turtles, fish, and animal skins. Outside there was a little frog thing. We had lunch outside, and there was a place where you could play. Then we went on a trail and saw horse nettle, which is poisonous. We also saw milkweed plants, and we went on a boardwalk and saw fish. Last we went to the "Birds of Prey". We saw owls, an eagle, peregrine falcons, a golden eagle, and two vultures. Owls have lots of feathers so you could stick a stick through the neck. We saw a golden eagle eat a rat and something else. I had a lot of fun there! ~ James Cleveland

Birds, Plants, and Animals

For our class trip we went to the Outdoor Discovery Center. I saw many things like plants and animals. For most of the morning we stayed inside and looked at mounted animals. There were a few live animals: three turtles, two snakes, and three frogs. The lady there showed us the black rat snake and the American toad. After that we went to eat lunch at the pavilion. They had a little park, so when we were done with lunch we got to play at the park.

After lunch we went for a hike. We looked at many plants and went on a boardwalk and saw many small fish. After the boardwalk, we hiked some more until we got to a few cages. The first bird we saw was a golden eagle. Before we were allowed to go look at them, our guide said to look for a few things. First, she said to look for the one that could catch a crayfish. Second, look for the one that is not a bird of prey. Last, which one cannot smell a skunk. (barred owl, turkey vulture, great horned owl) When we were done, we walked back to the bus. The room mothers gave us a bar and a Caprisun. When we were done, we rode back to school. It took about thirty minutes to get to school, so I slept. It was a fun day at the outdoor Discovery Center! ~ Michael Cleveland

God's Handiwork Everywhere

Our class took a field trip to the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway. At the discovery center we had an inside part and an outside part. In the inside part we had a scavenger hunt. For the scavenger hunt we all had a piece of paper and a clipboard. On the paper we had to find things that the paper said. When the scavenger hunt was done our guide brought out multiple animals. First the guide showed us a red-eared turtle. It is called that because it has a big red spot right by its ear. We tried to make it go into its shell, but it did not want to. Next we saw a black rat snake. It is called that because it is black, eats rats, and is a snake. The snake felt the floor (made of cement) and kept trying to get back by the guide because she was warmer than the floor. The snake is not venomous. We got to touch the snake. Surprisingly it did not feel hard. It almost felt wet, but it was not. The guide also showed us an American toad. We fed it meal worms. The toad does something like an army crawl! The toad hops close to its prey and then it kind of lurches forward and crawls even closer. When it is close enough, it flings out its tongue and catches its prey! After that we went to a pavilion and had lunch. When we were done, we went on a little zip-line and some toys.

Let's switch to the outdoors. First, we walked on a nature trail. Our first stop was at some milkweed plants. In the "seed pockets" there are lots of seeds with little fuzzy things that carry the seeds away so we do not just have milkweed in Grand Rapids. Farther down the trail the guide showed us golden rod plants. The gall fly digs into the golden rod and its spit makes the plant form a "bubble". There the gall fly turns into a type of adult fly. After two weeks it dies. Next we went on the nature trail and came to a "Birds of Prey" exhibit. There was a barred owl, two turkey vultures, a bald eagle, two peregrine falcons, a great horned owl, and a golden eagle. The guide took the barred owl out of its cage. The barred owl had something wrong with its right wing. It kept almost falling off the guide's glove. We talked about how the birds get to the nature center. In all we had a really fun day! After all that we had a snack, got on the bus, and went back to school. ~ Alex VanOostenbrugge

The fourth graders had to write about one thing that was new to them this school year. After reading their articles I could easily tell that the gaga ball pit has been a real hit. However, several students chose to write about something other than the popular playground game. Read the following paragraphs to learn of the "new things" for the fourth graders.

Gaga Ball

Something new that we have this year is a gaga ball pit. The gaga ball pit is a wooden structure in the shape of an octagon. In gaga ball people hit the ball at other people. If it touches you below your waist, you are out. You are also out if you hit it with both hands at one time. Whoever is not out at the end of the game wins. It is a fun game if people are honest. I like it a lot, usually. ~ Evelyn Price

Chromebooks

One thing new this year is that we get to use chromebooks. Chromebooks are mini-laptops that help you learn. We even got to pick our own password. You can play geography games, you can read on it, you can do anything you can do on a laptop. We read a book called *Danger: Dynamite*. It was such a good book! Chromebooks are so fun!

~ Avery DeVries

Choir

In fourth grade there are a lot of new things, but my favorite thing is choir. I love it because we have an awesome conductor, Mr. Elzinga. He is a great singer and a good conductor. (and good at singing British) I also like choir because I sit by a friend. I am in the front on the side by the fan. I wish I could be by more friends, but that is fine. I guess things do not always go as you plan. I get to play a song on the piano for choir. I love choir!

~ Eloise Langerak

Geography

This year we study something new – geography. Geography is my favorite subject. In geography you learn about different regions and their landscapes. We learn about how they were founded, how they make money, and a couple other things. I like geography because it is very interesting. I wish we had more time for it. ~ Jayden Bylsma

Gaga Ball

Gaga ball is a game you play. You throw a ball up and hit the ball with your hand. If it hits your feet, you are out; and you get out of the pit. You can jump to dodge the ball too. It is a great game to play.

~ Nick Oosterhouse

SCHOOL OFFICE NEWS



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

When: January 21, 2017

Where: Hope School

Time: 4-7 pm

2016-17 SCHOOL CALENDAR

November 24-25	Thanksgiving Break
December 2	All-School Program
December 8	Band/Choir Concert
Dec. 23-Jan. 2	Christmas Break
January 20	End of 1st Semester, 1/2 day
January 21	Family Fun Night
February 9	PTA
March 2-3	Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 24	Grandparents' Day
April 3-7	Spring Break
April 21-22	Kaleidoscope HeART Prize
April 26	Kindergarten Program
May 12	Elementary Music Program
May 29	Memorial Day – No School
June 1	Graduation
June 3	Hope Classic Races