

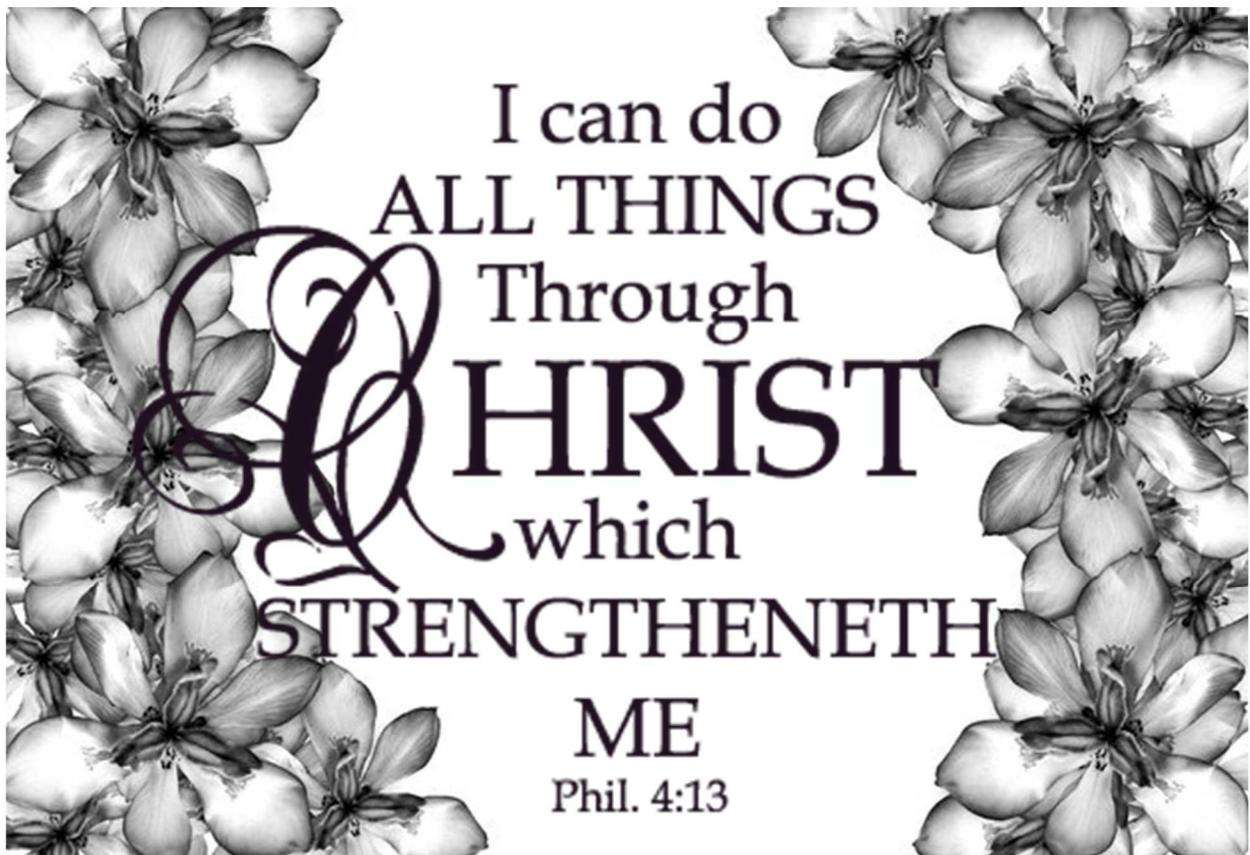


HIGHLIGHTS

Graduation Issue

~

May 2017



Plan we must. Plan we do. As one school year nears its close, a great deal of planning takes place for the next school year. That planning begins for the Board already in February as budgets are made and then teachers are hired. All our planning for the future we must do with this phrase on our lips, "the Lord willing." And then we live day by day not knowing what tomorrow will bring. Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread with His blessing because as Lord's Day 50 teaches us; neither our care nor industry, nor even God's gifts, can profit us without His blessing. We are taught to trust in God alone.

And we pause to look back. Bless us He has! This year marks the 70th anniversary of instruction at Hope School. I'm sure many of you are very familiar with Hope School's humble beginnings. Beginnings made by men and women of faith who trusted in the Lord to bless and establish the work of their hands. These were saints of conviction who saw the need to instruct God's children in all areas of life in the truth and light of God's Word. And how 70 years later that instruction continues with a much larger student body, staff, and wonderful facilities. We have much to be thankful for and real cause for continued dedicated labors, prayers, and giving.

In this *Highlights*, we recognize and congratulate our 30 eighth grade graduates. It is our prayer that they are blessed through the instruction they have received at Hope School and that the instruction has prepared them well to continue their studies at CCHS next fall. We also want to recognize those parents whose youngest child graduates from Hope School this year: Marv & Marcia Gritters, Ron & Sherry Koole, Steve & Deb Kuiper, Tom & Paula Mastbergen, Nathan & Tanya Pipe,

and Jeff & Kathy Terpstra. We thank them for having their children educated at Hope School and pray for their continued support of our school.

The Hope School Society conducted its annual meeting on April 24. Along with the Annual Secretary's Report, which you can read on the following pages, a few other details can be reported. The society approved a 1.1 million dollar budget for next year and a slight increase in the tuition schedule after several years with no increase. The purchase of a new bus was approved, as well as a proposal to update more hall ceilings and lighting. Also the following men were elected to three year terms to serve on the Board: Tim Bomers, Phil Kalsbeek, Mark Meulenberg, and Joel Vink. We thank the retiring Board members: Dan Boeve, Rich DeMeester, Joel Langerak, and Steve Lotterman. We are thankful for men who are willing and able to give of their time and abilities to provide wise direction and oversight over the instruction provided at Hope School.

Enjoy your reading of this year-end edition of the *Highlights*. Note the supply lists as well as the abbreviated 2017-18 school calendar.

- Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

2017-18 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 28	First Day of School
September 1-4	Labor Day Break
October 12-13	Parent/Teacher Conferences
October 19-20	Teachers' Convention
November 24-25	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 25-Jan. 2	Christmas Vacation
April 2-6	Spring Break
May 28	Memorial Day
June 1	Last Day of School
June 4	Graduation

ANNUAL FOUNDATION REPORT

For many years Hope School has had a Foundation whose purpose according to our constitution is “to accumulate Endowment Funds, the income of which is used to help support the education needs of Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School.” Over the past year, the Foundation Board has striven to fulfill that mission by bringing to your attention the Endowment Funds as a legitimate beneficiary for your giving. We do this through three fundraisers, The Sporting Clay Event, the Bass Fishing Tournament, and the Travelogue. These events are a means to raise funds for the Foundation but more importantly they are a means to bring awareness to the Foundation. Thanks to our individual sponsors and business sponsors these fundraisers were a success. We appreciate our sponsors and thank them for all they do for the Foundation.

So why donate to the Foundation or list the Hope School Foundation as a beneficiary of your estate when doing your estate planning? By donating to the Endowment Fund you are giving a gift that will, the Lord willing, continue to give for years to come. As of March 31 of this year, the Endowment Fund had assets of \$507,429.09 and from 2009 to this upcoming budget year will have contributed \$178,175.00 to the operating budget of our school. In doing so, the Endowment Fund contributions have been able to help keep tuition affordable for all of us and the Lord willing will also help our children with their tuition costs in future years. We ask that you continue to remember the Foundation in your estate planning and also in your annual giving so that we can

continue to grow this Fund for future generations.

This year the Foundation has committed to contributing \$20,000 towards the 2017-18 budget which is a \$2,000 increase from last year. We were able to increase our contribution as the Endowment Fund experienced a nice rebound from a year ago and posted a 7.4% gain for 2016 to end the year with a fund total of \$485,467. We appreciate the leadership of Dan Kalsbeek and Dave Moelker from Royal Securities for their help in managing our portfolio again this year.

This time of the year also means that change will be coming to the Board. We would like to welcome Scott Kooienga and Dave Rutgers who have agreed to join the Foundation Board. They will be replacing retiring Board members Phil Kalsbeek and Dan Kaiser. Rich DeMeester has served on the Foundation as the Board representative for the last three years and will also be retiring from the Board and Foundation. We appreciate all the work that Dan, Phil and Rich have put into the Foundation and thank them for their three years of faithful service.

As we look to forward to another year, we do so knowing that all our labor is in vain unless the Lord bless our efforts. We continue in our work trusting that He will continue to provide and bless Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School as He has done for 70 years.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

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

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” Ephesians 6:4

Another year of covenant instruction is quickly coming to an end here at Hope School. From the perspective of the Education Committee it has been a good year. From our own visits to the classrooms and from the reports of our administrator, who visits the classrooms on a regular basis, it is evident that our children have again received a well-rounded, Scripture based, Reformed education. We're thankful for a teaching staff that takes seriously their calling to help us as parents to rear the covenant children God has given us in the fear of His name. We're also thankful to report that all of our teachers have signed contracts to return next year, the Lord willing.

With over 30 students expected in Kindergarten, plans are for Mrs. Deb Hoeksema to teach full time next year. The class will be split with some students attending Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and others attending Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Our committee also approved Mrs. Hoeksema taking two courses at Grand Valley State University toward obtaining her Masters Certificate.

We recently finished updating and revising the *Handbook for Parents and Students*. One of the sections added to this handbook is the new *Technology Usage Policy*. This policy covers what is considered to be appropriate and inappropriate uses of the technology provided for our students, and possible disciplinary action for misuse or abuse. This policy is to be reviewed with all students on an annual basis.

We want to express our appreciation to our retiring Board member, Joel

Langerak, for his excellent work on our committee. Joel served as assistant secretary of the Board, Education Committee secretary, and chairman of the Technology Committee, in addition to many other duties. Thanks Joel, for all of your hard work and wise input over the last three years. As the newly elected vice-president of the Board, Mr. Tim Bomers will serve as Education Committee chairman this year. The other three members of the committee are, Andy Bylsma, Aaron Cleveland, and Jeff Kalsbeek, with our administrator Ron Koole serving as advisor.

Finally, we offer our hearty congratulations to the 2017 graduating class. May our Heavenly Father continue to bless the godly instruction you receive in your homes, in our churches, and in the good Christian schools which He has graciously provided, so that you grow up living a life of loving, serving, and glorifying Him.

ANNUAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2017

Mr. Aaron Cleveland, Board Secretary

Seventy years! During the spring and summer of 1947, covenantally motivated Protestant Reformed parents completed the construction of the first humble classrooms of Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School. That fall, the doors of the school were opened to 52 students. In a few weeks, Lord willing, Hope School will graduate 30 eighth graders from a body of 210 students. Hope School's seventy years of existence is a testimony to God's faithfulness to His covenant with us and our children.

While many "Christian" institutions exist for more than 70 years, over time they fall away from their founding principles and exist merely as shells of their former existence. This is not the case with Hope School. Just as they were in February of 1946, when dedicated fathers formed the Protestant Reformed School Society, the Scriptures, as explained in the Reformed Confessions, continue to be the guiding principle in all the decisions of the Society, the School Board, the administration of the school and the classroom instruction. There is only one reason for this: God's covenant faithfulness from generation to generation.

The past school year has progressed smoothly. Stephanie Daling, our new 2nd grade teacher, has fit in well with the rest of the teaching staff and is enjoying her labors. Nathan DeVries (junior high), Gayle Lotterman (3rd grade) and Deb Hoeksema (Kindergarten), all in their second year at Hope School, have been valuable additions to the teaching staff and are dedicated and diligent in their work. During teacher and staff interviews this past January, it was evident that a spirit of unity and cooperation prevails among the teaching staff, the administrator, the School Board and the parents. All of the teachers and staff have signed contracts for the 2017-18 school year.

As time goes on, technology is increasingly being integrated into the classroom instruction. Our classrooms have smartboards and projectors, and teachers make use of their computers and iPads. This year 32 Chromebooks, along with a mobile charging cart, were made available for teachers to use in their classrooms. Many teachers have been incorporating them into their instruction in creative ways. In the summer of 2018, we hope to add another cart of Chromebooks with touch screen capabilities. Dan DeVries (Grandville PRC) and Matt Elzinga, under the supervision of the Technology Committee, continue to do excellent work in keeping Hope School up-to-date technologically, using our limited financial resources.

The Building Committee has been busy in the past year. The Society approved ceiling tile and LED lighting project was completed on the east end of the school. Visitors to the school certainly appreciate the tastefully remodeled east entry to the school. The ladies of the School Circle are to be thanked for this improvement as well as many other updates they have both helped with and financed during the past school year. Visitors also notice the new safety measures implemented when they visit school during the day. Last summer, new polyaspartic flooring was installed in several bathrooms and the newer locker rooms. Shortly after the school year began, a new rooftop AC unit was installed for the school offices and kitchen. Each year, according to a schedule, certain classrooms are updated with new carpet and paint. Recently, the Board has approved plans to re-landscape the east side of the school, purchase new tables and chairs for the library, refinish the wood floor in the large gym and install new LED lighting in the small gym.

Another significant development this year has been the formation of a Long Range Planning Committee. In October of 2016, Hope School's mortgage was paid off and the

Board deemed it wise to form a committee that would look into the future facility needs of the school and bring recommendations to the Board. Enrollment projections for the next five years show increases in the size of incoming classes. The LRPC members are Ron Koole, Rich DeMeester, Jason Engelsma, Dave Moelker (Grace PRC), Jonathan Kamps and Jeremy Meulenberg. The committee plans on developing a master plan with input from constituents and the involvement of an architect and will report to the Board.

The Federation/Circle Contact/Publicity Committee spent many hours last summer working with Northbound Studio Design in designing a new school website and at the beginning of the school year the new site was launched (www.hopeprcschool.org). While additional material is still being added to the site, it is the hope of the Board that this site can be the central place where parents, students and constituents can go to for information and activity updates about Hope School. This committee and the Board also wants to bring before the Society our appreciation for all of the volunteer work that the mothers of the School Circle do which aids in the smooth operation of Hope School. Many other mothers, grandmothers and supporters also volunteer in the office, in the Motor Movement Program, in the library, help students with reading, play the piano and teach elementary music. This army of volunteers is invaluable.

This year the Board brings before the Society for approval a budget of \$1,139,610. This is an increase of \$44,880, or 4% from last year. The additional funds will come from a 2% rise in tuition and, it is hoped, a \$25,000 increase in gifts and pledges. Tuition rates at Hope School have not been raised since the 2011-2012 budget year. The Board is also proposing a modest \$50 increase in busing fees for the coming budget year. On the expense side of the budget, the Board is recommending that \$75,000 be deposited into the newly formed Long Range Building Fund for next year. Our teachers are also being given a 2.5% raise for the coming year.

During the 2016-17 budget year, the Transportation Committee recommended and the Board approved moving from a four year to a three year bus replacement schedule. Buses are now retired after nine years of service instead of twelve. Therefore, this year the Board seeks Society approval to purchase a 2018 Blue Bird Vision, 65 passenger bus, at the recommendation of the Transportation Committee.

Because of the increasingly wicked and threatening world in which we live, the Board has formed a committee which has been tasked with reviewing all school documents and policies. Our beliefs must be clearly stated in these documents so that, at least during the present time, we are able to have the protection of the laws of the land should it be the case that we are sued. This effort has expanded so that a committee of board representatives from local Protestant Reformed schools is formulating statements which can be used by all of our Protestant Reformed schools.

For seventy years God has been pleased to preserve Hope School for the instruction of our covenant children. The current generation has inherited this precious gift and to us comes the warning and promise of Deuteronomy 6:10-15.

[10] And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

[11] And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

[12] *Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.*

[13] *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.*

[14] *Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;*

[15] *(For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.*

May God, in His covenant mercy, grant strength to the Society, School Board, Administrator, teachers, parents, students and supporters of Hope School to remember the LORD our God, who has delivered us from the bondage of sin and given us a precious inheritance.

FEDERATION, CIRCLE CONTACT, PUBLICITY COMMITTEE REPORT

During the past year the Federation portion of our labors has involved attending the Federation of Protestant Reformed School Societies' fall delegate meeting. The spring meeting was cancelled due to lack of business to decide. It is worthy of note that retiring Board member, Joel Langerak, was selected as one of the initial members of the Teacher Training Committee (TTC). The TTC is the Federation's committee in charge of developing a college level teacher training program for prospective Protestant Reformed school teachers. This is a monumental effort which we hope brings about a formal teacher training program which will be distinctively Protestant Reformed.

Throughout the past year, according to our duties, our committee has overseen the work of the School Circle and both received and brought requests to the Circle. Every month the Circle sends their meeting minutes to our committee for Board approval. In reading over these minutes from month to month one is reminded of all of the things that the ladies of the Circle do that contributes to the smooth daily operation of the school. Most of the playground equipment has been purchased by the Circle. Every week the Circle arranges for a hot lunch for all of the teachers and students. PE uniforms are purchased and handed out by the Circle. The kitchen is cleaned and decorating is done around the school. If you enjoyed Heart Prize, the Circle organized and set it up. If you attended Grandparents Day, this was catered by the ladies of the Circle. Every year the teachers are shown appreciation with a lunch provided by the Circle. Volunteers from the Circle also help with the annual Teacher/Board dinner. The list could go on.

The point is that the School Circle is a valuable part of the Hope School community. Both our committee and the Board would also like to bring attention to all of the other volunteers that help weekly at the School. Many ladies help with the Motor Movement and Reading Together Programs. Volunteers play the piano for classroom singing, help in the office, teach elementary music and aid teachers in the classroom. If you volunteer at Hope School, consider yourself "thanked" and continue to employ your gifts "for the advantage and salvation" of the other members of the body--especially the "little" members of that body.

**HOPE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
INCOME STATEMENT
APRIL 2017**

	YEAR TO DATE	PERCENT TO BUDGET 10/12 - 83.3%	ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME			
CHURCH COLLECTIONS	36,077.76	0.77	47,000.00
GIFTS & PLEDGES	234,304.00	0.85	275,000.00
HOPE FOUNDATION	18,000.00	1.00	18,000.00
GYM RENTAL	6,052.00	1.32	4,600.00
SPECIAL ED SOCIETY	5,814.12	0.75	7,750.00
TUITION	660,406.34	0.93	713,580.00
BUS FEES	26,684.52	0.93	28,800.00
MISCELLANEOUS	200.00	-	-
TOTAL INCOME:	987,538.74	0.90	1,094,730.00

GENERAL EXPENSES			
ACCOUNTING FEES	2,940.00	0.83	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	20,800.00	0.91	22,800.00
BUILDING AND GROUNDS FUND	20,833.30	0.83	25,000.00
ELIM CHRISTIAN SERVICES	320.00	0.24	1,350.00
FEDERATION DUES	1,249.60	1.25	1,000.00
INSURANCE, GENERAL	7,098.50	0.76	9,350.00
INSURANCE, GROUP	63,379.28	0.63	100,115.00
INSURANCE, WORKERS COMP	1,815.45	0.59	3,100.00
INSURANCE, HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT	3,333.30	0.83	4,000.00
JANITORIAL SUPPLIES	3,093.90	0.77	4,000.00
LIBRARY FUND	1,000.00	1.00	1,000.00
MISCELLANEOUS	616.98	0.25	2,500.00
BUILDING MORTGAGE PAYMENT	34,201.10	0.46	75,000.00
LONG RANGE BUILDING FUND	13,712.50	0.83	16,455.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES	948.76	0.79	1,200.00
PAYROLL, ART TEACHER	-	-	2,000.00
PAYROLL, BAND	4,933.36	0.67	7,400.00
PAYROLL, BUILDING MAINTENANCE	1,449.00	1.04	1,400.00
PAYROLL, CHOIR	3,316.72	0.67	4,975.00
PAYROLL, DISCOVERY ROOM	38,013.95	0.83	45,600.00
PAYROLL, JANITOR	23,752.00	0.83	28,500.00
PAYROLL, LAWN MAINTENANCE	1,644.81	0.91	1,800.00
PAYROLL, LIBRARIAN	2,892.56	0.68	4,265.00
PAYROLL, OFFICE	22,765.25	0.88	26,000.00
PAYROLL, SUBSTITUTE TEACHER	990.00	0.50	2,000.00
PAYROLL, TEACHER	385,070.44	0.83	464,100.00
PAYROLL, TEACHER AIDE	10,148.06	1.13	9,000.00
PAYROLL, TECHNOLOGY MAINTENANCE	880.00	0.25	3,500.00
PAYROLL TAXES	35,581.87	0.77	46,000.00
RETIREMENT PLAN	13,064.18	0.85	15,300.00
PHYS ED UNIFORMS	623.25	0.69	900.00
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	7,788.79	0.87	9,000.00
SNOW REMOVAL	2,414.97	0.80	3,000.00
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT	1,000.00	1.00	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	15,905.67	0.84	19,000.00
UTILITIES, GAS	8,161.49	0.63	13,000.00
UTILITIES, TELEPHONE	1,670.79	1.04	1,600.00
UTILITIES, TRASH	1,527.34	0.90	1,700.00
UTILITIES, WATER & SEWER	782.27	0.52	1,500.00
CONTINGENCY	-	-	5,000.00
TOTAL GENERAL EXPENSES:	772,019.44	0.77	1,000,250.00

BUS EXPENSES			
BUS DEPRECIATION FUND	22,250.00	0.83	26,700.00
BUS DRIVER COST SUBSIDY	615.41	0.41	1,500.00
BUS DRIVER PAYROLL	26,850.00	0.87	31,000.00
BUS DRIVER PAYROLL TAXES	1,810.00	0.78	2,330.00
BUS DRIVER WORKER'S COMP	573.30	0.57	1,000.00
BUS INSURANCE	2,208.00	0.74	3,000.00
BUS REPAIR	9,365.19	0.74	12,700.00
GAS AND OIL	8,542.70	0.57	15,000.00
TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR	1,250.00	1.00	1,250.00
TOTAL BUS EXPENSES:	73,464.60	0.78	94,480.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	845,484.04	0.77	1,094,730.00
GAIN OR (LOSS):	142,054.70		

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Steve Lotterman, Chairman

Dan Boeve, Andy Bylsma, Jon Rutgers

As the end of the school year approaches, the Finance Committee looks closely at the financial situation of the school. Many of the major expenses for the year should be in, most of the tuition should be paid, and the scheduled drives for the year have been conducted. We study all these factors in order to project our "bottom line" when the end of the fiscal year arrives on June 30. Looking at our most recent financial statement shows our Income is tracking above budget, and our Expenses are below, with an overall net gain of over \$142,000.00. However, as we only have 1 more month of tuition income (all tuition is to be paid by June 1), and our expenses will continue through the fiscal year's end, this will most likely come close to balancing out.

This time of the year brings about a 'changing of the guard' within the Finance Committee. Our new Treasurer is Jon Rutgers. Joining him on the committee will be Mark Meulenberg (Vice-Treasurer), Dick Kuiper and Phil Kalsbeek.

It is a great privilege to have this school for our covenant children. We are thankful that our Heavenly Father supplies our needs and provides the means to operate this school. We are confident that, each day as we send our children to Hope School, we have teachers who are united with us in doctrine and life and assist in rearing the precious seed of the covenant. God's blessing will continue in our generations when we show our gratitude by supporting Christian education with our gifts and prayers.



Our Paper Gator bin is located on the south side of school between the garage and the school (next to the trash bin). We welcome your newspapers, phone books, magazines, & catalogues.

Thank you for your support!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR
PICTURE DAY!

September 22, 2017

We ask that you avoid making appointments in the morning & early afternoon for the students on this day.

STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

OUR MOM REPORTS

Mrs. Deb Hoeksema, Kindergarten

The amount of knowledge that the kindergarteners learn and retain throughout the year amazes me. When they first come to school, I have some children who have not mastered even half of their letters. By Spring Break, their ability to sound out and read words is incredible. In an effort to improve our reading and writing even more, and also celebrate our godly mothers that we have, I asked the class to finish the some sentences for me. What follows are their answers. The spelling is theirs, not mine. The phrases in parenthesis are my translations. I love when my mom:

- Colrs wiv me (*colors with me*) – Ally Kooienga
- Givs birthday pesit (*gives birthday presents*) – Ava Kalsbeek
- Wn sea tax me to the wotrpc (*when she takes me to the water park*) – Keira Wassink
- Makes me enshilods (*makes me enchiladas*) – Levi Cleveland

My mom makes great:

- Risue (*rice*) – Brodie Griess

The thing I love most about my mom is:

- Her hugs – Hannah VanderVeen
- Her cisis (*her kisses*) – Sonya Minderhoud
- Wen my mom las me go to a fraz hos (*when she lets me go to a friend's house*) – Dane Meulenberg
- Koloring – Anthony Kregel
- Shes funy! – Lily Rutgers

It makes my mom happy when I:

- Set the tabl – Brooklyn Huizinga
- Kulr a piktr (*color a picture*) – Logan Bylsma
- Write neatly – Cara Kalsbeek
- Kis hr (*kiss her*) – Elizabeth Price
- Drol picshurs (*draw pictures*) – Nelle Kregel
- Wen she helps me with my howrce wen im sic – (*when she helps me with my homework when I'm sick*) – Chase DeVries
- Do mi homwrk – (*do my homework*) – Jared Cleveland
- Tck me (*tickle me*) – Oliver DeMeester
- Mak her a prsnt (*make her a present*) – Abigail Kalsbeek

My mom is the best at:

- Macn tokos (*making tacos*) – Ethan DeVries
- Making the inside of chichen – Kate DeVries
- Cucen (*cooking*) – Aubrey Rutgers
- Clening skool (*cleaning school*) – Addi Koole
- Soing (*sewing*) – Ella Miersma
- Macng penut butr and jele (*making peanut butter and jelly*) – Benjamin Engelsma

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Miss Mikal Dykshorn, 6th Grade

One of my favorite things about teaching 6th graders is getting their perspectives and opinions....well, most of the time. One of the opportunities to listen to my students' opinions is when we discuss genetic engineering. This year in particular some very interesting conversation came up. During our discussion on the morality of genetic engineering we discussed what it meant to be content with how God has created us.

How easy it can be to sit in front of a mirror, staring at a reflection of yourself, picking out flaws. If only my eyes were a shade of blue, maybe if I didn't have that dimple in my chin, what if my hair was darker, lighter, straighter, curlier, if my nose was different or my smile. Maybe if I were thinner or taller, younger... If only we could change these things about ourselves, things would go better for us. We would be more confident, happier, people might notice us more, who knows what we think these changes might do for us. These things afflict almost all of us, and as students enter their teenage years they begin to prey on their thoughts as well.

Discussing these things brought up questions about plastic surgery, make-up, hair –dye, jewelry, even beauty products like hair gel and straighteners. One student decided he was going to say that it was wrong for girls to have their ear pierced. I'm sure he thought saying this to his teacher who is quite often adorned in sparkles and sequins would get him some amusing look or comment but we went with it. How do we decide what is right and what is wrong. Should girls not enhance their features with make-up? Should our hair be kept it's natural color, should we not cover up grays, should we not straighten it or curl it?

There are plenty of verses in the Bible that seem to state things to this effect. I Timothy 2:9: *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.* I Peter 3:3-4: *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* Isaiah 3 mentions in detail how the daughters of Zion will be brought low, by taking away their adornments. Verses 16-18: *Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon...* and it continues from there.

All of this seems to only apply to girls. Does this mean boys don't have to worry about things of this nature? Well the 6th grade boys seemed to think so, forgetting things like hair gel, or working out to get muscles. I have run into a few boys in my life that have taken more time to get ready than many girls I know. Somehow they didn't think these were as big of a deal, but either way it brought up some interesting conversation and many inquisitive questions. I thoroughly enjoyed their conversation, I love being able to see the wheels in their heads turn as they think about things they might not have before. But then the time always comes where they turn their little faces to me, and ask, *Miss Dykshorn, what is the answer?* And that's when I need to be honest. I don't know. I don't have the right answer for them. I can discuss my opinion, I can encourage them to talk to their parents, but I don't know. Maybe I shouldn't

straighten the natural waves out of my hair. Maybe I shouldn't wear sparkles. I don't have a definite answer and I don't think they need one. So in the end we discuss obeying what your parents say. Colossians 3:20: *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.* But I think it's good to get them thinking, they will have to decide things for themselves one day. They might have to decide what they think is best for their own children one day. It's important to ask yourself, what is my motivation? Do I wear sparkles so people notice me, do I want people to envy my clothing? Think I'm pretty? Because I'm not content with what God has given me? These are bad motivations. These motivations show that I'm caring more about my outside appearance.

Let's look back at I Peter 3:3-4: *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* It doesn't say that we cannot adorn ourselves, or that we shouldn't care about what we look like, after all our bodies are temples. What is important, is that we aren't emphasizing our outward appearance over our hearts. As we go throughout our days, that has to be our constant thought. Why am I doing these things? To glorify myself or to glorify God?



Excerpts from 6th Grade Writing on Genetic Engineering:

In our study of genetic engineering, we have learned how scientists are trying to alter genes or transfer them from one organism to another by using biotechnology. I guess, my biggest fear is that man tries to play God through genetic engineering. Can scientists genetically engineer the human race; create super people, or designer babies? In Genesis 1:27a we read, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him..." We must be careful when we try to change what God has created.

There is good that has come out of genetic engineering. In the medical field, genetic engineering has made great strides. Scientist are producing medicines needed by humans and one day they might be able to correct genetic defects before birth. So, yes, potentially genetic engineering could save lives. We must always remember to give God all the praise and glory. Genesis 1:31a reads, "And God saw everything that he has made and behold it was very good..."

In conclusion, I would like to say that overall genetic engineering has its place in the world, but we as Christians must be very careful how much emphasis is placed on science. We must always view science through God's Word.

~ Jonathan Boeve

Genetic engineering is a process by which genes are altered or transferred from one organism (human) to another. There are different ways that genetic engineering can be used. Some uses are very wrong, while others can be very beneficial. I believe it is wrong to alter a baby genetically because God is the one who decides who your child is going to be, what they look like, and what traits they will inherit. Also, I believe plastic surgery is wrong because God has decided what we will appear like, and His plan is perfect. God tells us in the book of Ecclesiastes about His providence in His creation. Ecclesiastes 7:13 "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?" This states that man

cannot twist or change what God has created because it is perfect. We also see God's handiwork in I Timothy 4:4, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."

God gave man the ability to genetically engineer, and if God did not will it, He wouldn't have let men discover this miraculous and mysterious wonder. As a married couple, or as a parent, I believe it is your decision whether to use or forbid genetic engineering, in any case.

~ Madison Rau

With all this technology, as Christians, we have to ask ourselves is genetic engineering right? The Bible is our guide for everything in our lives. It says in Psalm 139:14 "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." This teaches us God made us in His perfect will. In His eyes, we are perfect. I think genetic engineering for medicine is all right. God gave us some advancements to help us. There is also a time when a Christian can selfishly go too far in medical needs. I do not think that using this type of genetic engineering is going too far. Next, we come to fixing defects like a brain tumor before birth. I don't think they can fix down syndrome yet, but they are working on it. If they could, I would not get a baby involved in that sort of thing. God made all creatures the way He wants them to be. If you look in our churches you notice how important those special needs really are. It says in I Timothy 4:4 "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." This shows God makes everyone good even the special needs for they are indeed special. Finally, we get to genetically engineering your baby for cosmetic purposes. I think this is wrong. When you do this, you are saying you know better than God does. You are changing your baby to the way you want it to look. When you do that, you are mocking the all-knowing God. In Isaiah 45:9a we read, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!" This verse tells us those that go against his Maker shall have warning. For example, the pot cannot sat to the potter, "I don't like the way you made me," just like we cannot say I know better than thee, God.

~ Jeremy Langerak

If you are using genetic engineering for life or death purposes that is okay. There are many passages in the Bible that talk about the healing done by the Son of God, such as Matthew 14:14, *And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.* Jesus knew this was the way God had made these people, with diseases, but he had compassion and used what God had given Him to help others. We can refer this to use, we must use the knowledge God has given men to help others with serious disease. Maybe you are using it because God has not given you the ability to have children; these are good ways to use the technology God has given us. This is using genetic engineering the right way.

Overall, I believe that genetic engineering is right or wrong depending on what is in your heart.

~ Miya Meulenberg

Genetic engineering is wrong because it goes against God's will. In Ecclesiastes 7:13 it says, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?" This verse shows that God decides what a child looks like and what difficulties he will face. There is a spiritual and earthly fight that all of God's children face, and God chooses

which child will face what difficulties in life. God made everything in His own glory. In the first part of Genesis 1:31 it says, "And God saw everything that he hath made, and, behold, it was very good." This verse is telling us that God saw His creation and it was good. Who are we to tell God that his creation is not good by genetically engineering a child and going against God's will on how that baby will look and be like. God chooses whether or not that child will look pretty on the outside or if he will have any kind of illness or weakness in his life or not. It does not matter whether a child is pretty because to God outward appearance does not matter, only what your heart is on the inside, whether you love Him or not.

In conclusion, I think it is wrong to genetically engineer a child concerning looks or medical issues because you are trying to change God's plan into your plan. You are not accepting what God has given you and you are trying to make it better. We must rejoice in God's creation and not ruin it. We must be happy in whatever God gives in everything, but especially the wonderful gift of children.

~ Emma VanUffelen

MORE READING SUGGESTIONS

Mr. Ed Bos, 7th Grade

Several years ago, I wrote an article about books I have read and recommended to parents. I decided that an update to that list is due. Every year, especially during the summer, I read new books so that I have new stories to tell in class and add more interest to what I am teaching. Quite often I come across a book that I wish more people would read. So what follows is a list of some of those books.

A recent book I found especially interesting is called *Destiny of the Republic* by Candace Millard. When I first saw the book's topic, the assassination of President Garfield, I was a bit skeptical, but because of the author, I decided to read it, and I was not disappointed. In fact, I have passed it on to several others who also recommended the book. It tells of the political climate of the times which really gives insight into today's politics. Also, the accounts of inventors of the time, especially Alexander Graham Bell, are fascinating. This book is one of the best I have read in the past year. (Actually, any book by Millard is really good – *River of Doubt*, about Teddy Roosevelt's exploration of the Amazon River basin, and *Hero of the Empire*, about Churchill and the Boer War.)

Another fascinating book is *The Real Lincoln* by Thomas J. DiLorenzo. This is a different and more accurate account from any other you have ever read about Lincoln. It destroys the popular myths about him. Although the author goes a bit far in his account about Lincoln and Reconstruction (Lincoln was killed before Reconstruction began, so to say what Lincoln might or would have done is pure supposition), his basic premise is a good one – how Lincoln subverted the Constitution, and also how he never freed the slaves.

Also on my list is *Killing the Rising Sun* by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard. While there are a couple language issues in this book, the accounts of the dropping of the two atomic bombs is beyond fascinating. Because of the language issues, I would not recommend this book to students. But the "kids' version" of this book, *The Day the World Went Nuclear*, is due out very soon.

It is not only individual books that I recommend, but also, as noted above, authors. Another highly recommended author is Nathaniel Philbrick. The most recent ones I have read by him are *Valiant Ambition* and *The Last Stand*. The former is a very interesting and spellbinding

account of the relationship of George Washington and the famous traitor Benedict Arnold; it helps to understand why Arnold did what he did without exonerating him. The latter is an account of Custer's "last stand" at the Little Bighorn River; it shows there is a lot of blame to spread around to many military leaders, telling the story from both American and Indian viewpoints. Other very good books by Philbrick include *Mayflower* (which gives a lot of facts we were never taught in school), *Bunker Hill*, *In the Heart of the Sea* (the story which inspired *Moby Dick*), and *Sea of Glory* (which deals with the little-known U.S. exploration of the coast of Antarctica). All of these make very worthwhile reading.

Another author I have really enjoyed is Jeff Shaara. His books are technically historical fiction, because he uses writings of the men involved to make conversations, but it otherwise is a straight historical account of events. He writes exclusively about the wars in American history, and a rather large percentage (7 out of 15 – with one actually written by his father Michael) have been on the Civil War. I wish I could pick out a definitively "best one", but when recommending them I always end up with, "This one is really good", and then, "Oh, this one's really good, too", etc., etc. But if you are interested in the characters and history of World War I, *To the Last Man* is exceptional. But then the account of Robert E. Lee and others in the Mexican War in *Gone for Soldiers* is fantastic also – see what I mean on the "etc., etc." above?

What I have been doing recently that has been highly profitable is that I been interrupting my reading with other reading – that is reading Rev. McGeown's book *Called to Watch for Christ's Return*. This is an excellently written and highly readable exposition of Matthew 24-25. While reading history, it is always good to be reminded of why we are reading and studying history. And to have the Biblical viewpoint interwoven with what one is reading is always profitable. Rev. McGeown covers many of the points we make in class about why we study history, including: 1) It helps us to look forward to the End of Time - we see the signs of the times – the development of sin and the march of the four horsemen. 2) Because history is the unfolding of God's Plan, we learn His will for us and for the world; we learn how He providentially governs all things and events. 3) Also, because all history is God's story, it all centers on Christ and the Church (Col 1:16-17). 4) We gain assurance of God's constant faithfulness when we see He has been faithful throughout history.

In fact, if you read nothing else on this book list above, read Rev. McGeown's book.



Below are some examples of devotions written by 7th graders this year.

Brooke Cammenga
Ecclesiastes 12:1-8

I picked this passage because in these days, evil is always at your door, and it is hard to turn away from it. We need to remember the Lord in all we do, no matter what the circumstance is. At the end of time we must still remember the Lord, even though it will be difficult, especially because of persecution. With the things of the earth, and the wickedness and sin, even God's

children can become very vain and need the Lord to remind them of their sin.

Ethan Copple
Hebrews 11:1-7

This talks about our faith. Our whole life is based on faith. Noah was told by God to build the ark because God was going to send rain. God had never sent rain before, but by faith Noah built the ark because he believed what God told him. We must have

as much faith as Noah did because we live in times which are the same as Noah's.

Callie DeVries
Matthew 26:26-30

I chose this passage because it teaches us why we must give thanks. That reason is because Jesus gave an example in this passage to us. When he sat down to eat with his disciples, He first gave thanks to God before he passed out the bread and wine. This is an example to us to give thanks to God for what we have. Also, we can be thankful in times of trouble and hardship because we know that all things work for our profit.

Claire DeVries
1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

In this passage, Paul tells us to esteem and love our leaders. Why? Because of the work they do, Paul says. Take a look at the teachers in your school. They have to deal with kids who are unruly. Who talk back. Who make messes. Who dislike them. When they find a kid who actually behaves and wants to learn, they're probably amazed. But why don't you be that kid? Thank your teachers when they help you. Let them know you like them. Tell them you appreciate their hard work. It may not get you better grades – it shouldn't – but it will please God.

Caleb Kalsbeek
Psalm 65:9-13

I chose this passage because it says we must be thankful for the abundance of food God gives to us from His creation. Also, in the fall it is harvest time, and you can see the abundance of food in the corn fields and many other places. We must trust in God that He will provide for us what we need.

Grace Kalsbeek
James 4:1-10

I picked this passage because it tells how we must have Godly, Christian friends. Whoever is a friend of the world is the enemy of God. This also shows we must be humble because God gives grace to the humble. When we humble ourselves before the Lord, then He will lift us up.

Jedd Kalsbeek
Jonah 2:1-10

I chose this chapter because Jonah prayed to God, and God answered him. Because of this, Jonah thanked God. Even though it seems like God doesn't answer us in the way we want Him to, we still must thank Him. Everything is in God's good plan.

Chloe Kaptein
Ephesians 5:1-5

I picked this passage because it tells us to walk in love. We shouldn't do things that are not convenient, like foolish talking. In verse 2, it tells us to watch what we say and do, because it all reflects on whose child we are. We must do things that show our thanks to God so that the world will know for sure that we belong to a God deserving of our thanks.

Levi Klamer
Genesis 18:1-8

I chose this passage because it shows how we must love our neighbor. We don't always know them or what they need, but we can still be hospitable to them. We must care for our neighbor and love them. We must always want the best for them and provide them their needs. Let's remember this in this day.

Lydia Meulenberg
Colossians 3:23-25

I picked this passage because with the upcoming year, and as we do our work, we

have to do our work to the best of our ability. We do it not to get the praise of men but to the glory of God and to get the praise of God.

Lydia Vandenberg
Lamentations 3:22-33

I picked this passage, especially the first two verses, because they remind us of the mercy of God and His faithfulness to us. We are reminded that He sent His Son to die on the cross for us, so we could have everlasting life in heaven instead of eternal punishment in hell.

Emma Minderhoud
Philippians 4:9-14

This passage teaches us that we must learn to be content in whatever state we are. Whether we have little or we have much, we need to be content – when we are in a low state and when we are in a high state. Everywhere and in all things, we must learn to be content. We must learn both to abound and to suffer need. For we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We can do nothing without Christ.

ANTITHESIS AND LIFE

Mr. Nate DeVries, 8th Grade

The word antithesis is defined as “the direct opposite” or as opposition/contrast. As the definition makes clear, in an antithetical relationship there are two opposing sides who are complete opposites from each other and contrast each other completely. There is no middle or common ground; the two sides oppose each other in every way.

The antithesis, created by God Himself, did not come into existence when Adam fell into sin. The thesis, or “that which is set forth”, is the Word of God concerning Himself and was set forth already on the first day of creation and in the Garden of Eden. God called light out of darkness, two things completely opposite of each other. Likewise, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the antithesis of the tree of life just as sin is the antithesis of the righteousness of God. According to Rev. Key in the Jan. 1, 1997 SB, “If the “Yes” is the thesis, the proclamation of God's glory, then the “No” is the antithesis. It is to take the contrasting position over against all that which would oppose God's glory. To say “yes” to God, it is necessary also to say “no” to sin”. When man fell into sin, the totally depraved nature of man was the antithesis of the perfection of God. Again, Rev. Key says, “when God created man and gave man his fundamental calling to love Him, God also determined that the beauty of that life of obedience and the joy of His covenant fellowship should be seen against the dark background of disobedience and death”. It is necessary here to add that God is sovereign over sin, and it was part of His eternal decree.

Not only did God eternally decree that man would sin, but he also eternally decreed that He would redeem His elect people, and they would not remain antithetical to Him. Ephesians 2: 4-7 describes this purpose. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” God also established His covenant of friendship and love with each of those decreed in eternity to be saved. The elect children of God are, therefore, not the antithesis of God but are united with Him.

With the promise of the covenant came the antithesis between those saved by grace and those who were left in their depravity. This is described in Genesis 3:15 where God says to Satan, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed". Enmity, according to the dictionary, means "the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something". The spiritual seed of the woman is the antithesis of the spiritual seed of the serpent, and enmity is found between them. This enmity is not that the world hates the church, but it is that the church and the world are the direct opposite of each other and are actively opposed to each other. God Himself has created enmity; it cannot be changed by men and may not be ignored or compromised by the child of God. This state of enmity shows the spiritual separation between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent and is a requirement of the members of God's covenant.

The calling of believers to live the antithesis determines how each child of God lives his life and conducts himself in the world. Rev. Key, in the April 1, 1997 issue of the *Standard Bearer*, explains this well: *"The antithesis, put to practice in our lives, means that there are many activities, wholly acceptable to the world, which we as the friends of God are not comfortable with. In fact, insofar as we live in the consciousness of our fellowship with the Holy One, we abhor many things that the world counts pleasure. As the friends of God, we find many worldly activities offensive to our calling to holiness. Indeed, many of the activities of this world are nothing less than expressions of the world's depravity and hatred of God.*

Living in this consciousness affects our perspective concerning the use of television, for example. It causes us to reject many of the world's amusements—their dancing which inflames the lusts, their party-life and abuse of alcohol, their love of pleasure, their worship of sports.

But this truth also points to the fact that the antithesis hits very close to home.

The antithesis also operates within us. We have daily to fight a tremendous battle against our own sinful flesh. Read Romans 7. Was it not the warfare of the flesh against the Spirit that compelled the apostle to cry out, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" You and I must live the antithesis by fighting the battle of faith against that great enemy within—the old man of sin."

Another important part of the antithetical life is how and what believing parents teach their children. The well-known passage from Deuteronomy says, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." This is a crucial calling to believing parents and is the reason for the establishment and continued existence of good Christian schools. Rev. David J. Engelsma, in a *Standard Bearer* article titled *The Antithesis and Christian Education (December 1, 1985, 110-113)*, says that "good Christian schools are a singularly clear expression of the antithesis in the lives of the covenant people of God; and the instruction that such schools give is controlled by the antithesis." What is taught in the schools is of utmost importance as well. Students must be taught the antithesis; they are taught that there is a separation on earth between two kinds of people. The separation is not a separation based on a social standing, but a separation between those who love their Creator and those who deny a sovereign God. Students must learn to have a Christian mind and to live in every area of life according to the Word. Students must also learn to discern the truth and the lie in every area of life. Finally, Rev. Engelsma states that "the school teaches the antithesis also by pointing out, in every subject, that God, the Sovereign of history and the Judge of all mankind, curses the unrighteous wicked and blesses His righteous people, in time and history.

In this way, the school, in its own manner, reinforces the call to the children: ‘come out from among them; and be ye separate’ (II Cor. 6:17).”

I conclude with a final quote from Rev. Engelsma that gives us much hope and encouragement here in this school. “If we maintain and practice the antithesis in our education of our children, God will bless us; and His blessing will be sweet—nothing less than the continuation of His covenant with our sons and daughters, graced by Him to be stalwart in the truth and beautiful with holiness.”



Sample writings by the 8th graders:

On January 12, Rev. D Holstege reached Manila in the Philippines. Rev. Kleyn and his wife were already there helping teach the Protestant Reformed religion to the locals. On January 22, Rev. Holstege preached for the first time in the Philippines. He preached an inaugural speech, at Provident Christian Church, on I Corinthians 2:1-5. He did this to show that his goal was to follow Paul’s example and preach Christ crucified, “nothing more, nothing less”. Rev. Holstege started preaching the Heidelberg Catechism and the Lord’s Days to the people there. He also took over a Thursday night doctrine class, and Rev. Daniel Kleyn teaches the people the Canons of Dordt.

When he arrived in the Philippines, Rev. Holstege had to get used to some changes in his day-to-day life. These changes included using a different kind of electrical outlet, getting rid of red ants in the kitchen, moving slowly through heavy Manila traffic, and how to get the groceries in this country. Rev. Holstege also had to get used to living in a culture much different from ours, how to communicate with the people in the Philippines_(this meant learning Tagalog), and learning how to refrain from making cultural blunders.

It is amazing to view how God has spread the gospel throughout all parts of the world. We can see that Rev. Holstege has and will be facing many different changes and difficulties in his life. We should thank God for sending this man to spread the gospel and preach Christ crucified to the people of Manila. Let us surely remember him in our prayers.

~ Jorden Moelker

Many of our Protestant Reformed Churches are in contact with churches on other continents. Georgetown Protestant Reformed Church has been in contact with Pastor Paulraj and his church in India. Pastor Paulraj was born to Christian parents and has three living sisters. He was married to his wife Kasthuri in 2001. After they were married, Paulraj and Kasthuri went to Singapore where Paulraj studied under Rev. Jason Kortering for two years. They returned to India, and Pastor Paulraj was ordained in September 2009. In March 2011, he established a church in India. Now, Paulraj and Kasthuri have two children named Jason and Joan.

Unlike Paulraj, Kasthuri was born to Hindu parents. Her parents could not support her financially, so she went to live with Dr. David Kirupakaran. He was a Christian and encouraged her in the Christian faith. Although she graduated college as a registered nurse, she turned down a job in the United States to start an orphanage in India. In 2007, with the help of Georgetown Protestant Reformed Church, Paulraj and Kasthuri started Grace Foster Home for children who are orphans or have been abandoned by their parents. There are about fifty children at Grace Foster Home. Among those children are sixteen sets of siblings. The children go to a local government school and are also tutored in English. They pray and have devotions

together at Grace Foster Home. All of the children have a sponsor from Georgetown or another Protestant Reformed Church. These sponsors provide spiritual, emotional, and monetary help. Although the members of the church in India have different lifestyles than we do, we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

~ Cynthia Kuiper

Grace Foster Home

Begun by Pastor Paulraj and his wife Kasthuri in 2007, the Grace Foster home in Vellore, India, is an orphanage that houses around fifty children. These children are brought to the home when their parents die or are afflicted in some other way. Not only this, but they are also taken in from streets or abusive homes. The orphanage is staffed by Christian women who provide a loving environment where the youths burgeon. They each receive specific tasks, the older aiding the younger when requisite. While they attend the local government school, they are also tutored in English. Because the home is an outreach of the Reformed Christian Church of Vellore, these children are part of the congregational life and family and receive catechism instruction, attend Sunday School, and participate in devotions twice daily.

Even though these fifty children have suffered unimaginable ordeals or deprivations, the bliss on their faces shines through when they hear the Word of God. The scriptures bring not only unspeakable comfort to them, but also great hope. They anticipate reading the Bible every day. They hear of their savior, Jesus Christ, who will never forsake or leave them, and this brings immense comfort. The grace of God is truly prominent in these children's' lives. What an incredible opportunity to raise these children in Christ! For this we are to continually thank and praise God.

~ Allie Terpstra

Scriptures clearly reveal that the elect children of God are scattered in all places of the earth. This wonderful testimony is seen in the congregation located in Yangon, Myanmar. Beginning in 2007, Hope PRC, located in Grand Rapids Michigan, has been spiritually and financially supporting this small congregation. Roughly one hundred people attend this church and enjoy the preaching of the true gospel in this foreign land. Even though the preaching is enjoyed here, the Myanmar government has not always been favorable. Up until two years ago, the Myanmar government was not in favor of the Christian religion in a predominantly Buddhist country.

Rev. Titus is the pastor of this small but faithful congregation. God has been using this man to strengthen this church that is constantly living in fear of the government. Rev. Titus faithfully labors day and night, teaching three catechism classes and a Reformed doctrine class, on top of his continual translating. He continually posts information on his blog and stays in close contact with Hope's consistory. Even though these two churches are on opposite sides of the world, both congregations have been deeply affected by the other.

The congregation in Myanmar has been spiritually and financially supported by Hope and has been grateful for the deacons and elders that have been sent to them for edification and encouragement. Hope, on the other hand, has been privileged to see the example of the people in Myanmar. The church there is the life of the people. Young people and adults continuously attend catechism classes and love to learn more about the word of God. We should take their example and make the church the center of our lives. We all know how difficult it is to focus on Heavenly things. Even though we may think our lives are too busy to dedicate more time to the things of God, we must recognize our position and purpose of life. We were

created by God to live our lives glorifying His name in this increasingly wicked world. The example of the congregation in Myanmar should be in the front of our minds as our physical workloads increase.

~ Jake VanUffelen

The Protestant Reformed Churches grow in many ways and forms. The Reformed Fellowship of Franklin, Pennsylvania, is a good example. The Franklin Reformed Fellowship had been the Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church. After their minister left to go to Idaho, they were too small to continue as a church and so became a Reformed Fellowship. The wife of an elder, who was raised Protestant Reformed, mentioned Reverend Bruinsma, the current pastor of Pittsburgh Protestant Reformed Church, who was about two hours away. The Reformed Fellowship got in touch with Rev. Bruinsma and the Domestic Mission Committee and asked them about a preacher from the Protestant Reformed Churches. They were interested in becoming a Protestant Reformed Church. Starting December of last year, Reverend Slopsema and Reverend den Hartog preach two Sundays per month in the Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church. About three couples and two individuals make the Franklin Reformed Fellowship, which is now trying to gain interest in their community through newspapers and the development of a website. The Reformed Fellowship is growing in faith through the gospel and through God's providence.

~ Amber Mastbergen

PR Mission Field in the Philippines

The mission field in the Philippines is a very active field. Five ministers labor in this denomination: Revs. Ibe, Flores, Trinidad, Kleyn, and most recently, Holstege. The denomination (Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines or PRCP) consists of three churches: the Berean PRC, the PRC in Bulacan, and the Maranatha PRC. A total of 57 families make up this denomination. The Provident Church in Marikina is itself a mission and desires to become a part of the PRCP. Thus, it has been the object of regular mission work since 2013. The missionaries that labor in these congregations have many diverse duties, some of which include preaching twice each Sunday, leading Bible studies, advising the churches, and pastor training. In addition to these labors, Rev. Kleyn, Rev. Holstege, and their wives are learning the language of the native Filipinos, which is called Tagalog. All of these duties keep the ministers very busy, yet they still find time to perform some mission work of their own within the Philippines. This includes the selling of books and the website of the PRCP. On the website, there are many audio sermons (including some translated into Tagalog) and various lectures. The books, sold by Mrs. Sharon Kleyn, include all the works of the RFPA and many materials from the PR seminary. Funding for these books from PRCA congregations helps to keep the costs low for Filipinos. Since these labors are too much even for the five men laboring in the Philippines, the FMC is calling yet another God-ordained minister to serve as missionary. Truly we can see that in this area of our mission work the "harvest is plenty, but the laborers few."

~ Leah VandenBerg

Congratulations, Class of 2017!!!



Josiah Bomers



Joshua Bosveld



Kirsten Brands



Joshua Brunsting



Chet Doezema



Caroline Duistermars



Brett Gritters



Leah Hop



Brendan Kalsbeek



Hannah Kamps



Denise Klayn



Austin Koole



Cody Koole



Cynthia Kuiper



Rachel Langerak



Stephanie Langerak



Brett Lotterman



Amber Mastbergen



Eric Moelker



Jorden Moelker



Harm Molenkamp



Elena Overway



Alissa Pipe



Joel Rutgers



Zachary Schwarz



Rylee TenBroek



Allison Terpstra



Leah Vandenberg



Jake VanUffelen



Malachi Windemuller

SUPPLY LISTS

Kindergarten

Backpack	Pillow (labeled)
Folder w/ pockets	Gym shoes - velcro style (labeled)
Scissors	2-3 large glue sticks
Crayons (24)	Eraser
Pencil box/holder	Colored Pencils (optional)
Paint shirt (labeled)	
Markers (optional)	*We provide "fat" Tri-Write pencils



1st Grade

KJV Bible (2 nd semester)	Scissors
Pencil box	Folder (2 pocket)
4 pencils	Paint shirt
1 large eraser	Gym shoes (labeled)
Washable markers	Colored Pencils
16-24 crayons	2 solid glue sticks

2nd Grade

KJV Bible	Homework folder with 2 pockets
Pencil box	Gym shoes (labeled)
12 Pencils (#2)	Paint shirt (labeled with name)
2 large erasers	2 solid glue sticks
16-24 crayons	Scissors
Colored pencils	Red Pen
Washable markers	2 plastic folders with 2 pockets
2 Spiral notebooks	

3rd Grade

KJV Bible	12 pencils
Glue stick	2 large erasers
Colored pencils	Crayons (16-24)
Washable Markers	Ruler (in and cm)
Pencil box	Scissors
(2) 2-pocket folders	Gym shoes
2 red pens	
1 spiral notebook (NO binders)	
2 (100 ct) packages sticky notes	
1 sock (no holes)	
Paint Shirt (labeled)	



4th Grade

KJV Bible	Wide-ruled notebook paper
Pencils/Erasers	Scissors
Gym shoes (labeled)	3-ring binder
3 Red pens	Binder dividers with 5 tabs
Colored pencils	Glue Stick or Elmer's Glue
Ruler w/ inches & cm.	

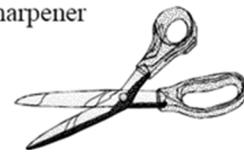


5th Grade

KJV Bible	Pencils/Eraser
Crayons	Scissors
Ruler	Notebook paper
Pencil sharpener	3-ring binder
Gym Shoes	
Glue stick or rubber cement	
Binder dividers with 5 tabs	

6th Grade

KJV Bible	3 ring binder w/ 6 folders
Psalter	Assignment Book
Notebook paper	Pencils
Gym shoes (labeled)	Scissors (good)
Eraser	Colored pencils
Pens	Ruler
Highlighter	Black felt tip pen
3-5 subject notebook	Pencil Sharpener
Glue or rubber cement	



7th & 8th Grades

KJV Bible w/ references, concordance, and maps
 Blue/black pens
 Several red pens
 Colored pencils
 Pencils
 Scissors
 Something in which to carry above items
 Notebook paper
 Binder w/ folders
 Assignment book
 5 subject notebook
 Ruler
 Protractor & compass (optional)
 Scientific calculator - TI-30XIIS (available at school for \$14)
 Flash drive
 Gym clothes – labeled
 Gym Shoes
 Single subject notebook

PARENTS:
 Please mark your child's items with his/her name, especially clothing items.