



# HIGHLIGHTS

*~ Thanksgiving Issue ~  
November 2018*



*"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*

*A time to be born, and a time to die;*

*A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;*

*A time to kill, and a time to heal;*

*A time to break down, and a time to build up;*

*A time to weep, and a time to laugh;*

*A time to mourn, and a time to dance..."*

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-4*







## FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD



### EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Tim Bomers, Chairman  
Andy Bylsma, Ken Engelsma, Mark Meulenberg

Every several months our committee is tasked to write an article for the *Highlights*. This is to keep our constituents up-to-date on what is going on at Hope School and in particular, educationally. There is a due date that said article must be submitted to our hard-working secretary, Miss Lotterman, so she can start laying out the various articles that are submitted. Although this responsibility for writing an article is tasked to the chairman, other members may also volunteer to contribute. For me, the anxiety of what to write about is subsiding. Understanding the role of the chairman in writing articles is now accepted. Deciding on what needs to be written occupies my mind frequently. The article must be about education, plain and simple. That doesn't stop this writer from thinking he's the one that needs the educating, nor does it stop the 3 am thoughts of how this article is going to get written.

What is a good article? Let's try being informative. Our five-member education committee, Andy Bylsma, Ken Engelsma, Mark Meulenberg, myself and Administrator Ron Koole, is handling routine business well. Having new members on the board brings questions about what we are doing in a beneficial way, so that one is always analyzing what he is doing and why. This year seems to be quiet in regards to problems. Quiet can be attributed to our experienced administrator, but one cannot ignore the experience and wisdom of our teachers as well. Although this quiet could end at any time, we, as a committee, appreciate this peace. We attribute this to the harmony we all share as believers in the Bible, hence our Lord Jesus Christ. Mentioning the quiet we share, look at the noise round about us! The devil is roaring even as God speaks in a still small voice. Jesus Christ reigns but the world still seeks our children, the devil is seeking to get some control in this school. James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

As parents and as grandparents, I encourage you to speak to our children about the evils of cannabis, about the evils made available on the internet and through social media, excessive use of alcohol, defying of authority that we see in society, government and sports. Talk to them about the sexual perversion that is rampant in society. Children must be educated by us or they will be educated by this world. We must sound the alarm because as individuals in this world, we can become numb to the evil and wickedness around us. How many babies have been aborted since Roe versus Wade? Thinking on that and recent laws sanctifying gay marriage, we realize we live in a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah.

Let us encourage each other in the training of our children, and let us encourage His children to live faithfully till the time of His coming to deliver us from evil.

The Education Committee of your children would love to hear from you concerning the oversight we have of this Christian school. To that end we appreciate letters of suggestions and letters of encouragement. The Education Committee would like to take this time to thank all employees at Hope School for their diligence and commitment, and ask for your continued prayers for our beloved school.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Rutgers, Chairman

Phil Kalsbeek, Jeremy Langerak, David Rutgers

Hope School's new fiscal year started this past July, so we are well under way into the new budget year. As reported in the last *Highlights*, we fell \$6,750 short of our \$300,000 drive goal last year, however, our lower expenses made up the difference. This fiscal year, the society has approved a \$10,000 increase of our drive goal. The drive allows us to maintain reasonable tuition rates for families while giving opportunity for all covenant believers to assist in Christian education.

Our fall drive letter was sent out in late October and Lord willing we would like to collect \$155,000 in the fall which is half of the \$310,000 budget. Please continue the giving as the drive is 26.5% of our annual budget of just over one million dollars. Perhaps consider another gift before the end of the calendar year if possible. We will keep you updated on the results of the drive as we near the end of the calendar year.

A review of the first three months (25%) of the fiscal year is included in this *Highlights*. Our income is at 22% as minimal drive income has been received to date. Our total expenses are currently at 23% of budget which is right in line with where we should be. We thank the vast majority our tuition paying families for their timely payments. Our committee also monitors past due tuition and is happy to report that with rare exception we receive very good response and profitable communication from those families that may be struggling to keep up. It makes our labor on behalf of the school much more pleasant when we receive good cooperation.

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.

After many years of faithful service, our bookkeeper, Mr. Steve Kuiper is in the process of handing over the reins to Mr. Larry Meulenberg. Steve asked us to look for a replacement last year and Larry has been at the helm now for a few months. Steve has graciously worked with Larry to make the transition very smooth, and the Finance Committee has taken notice that an "ole retiree" can still learn new tricks! Our bookkeeper position includes paying the bills each month including payroll every two weeks, providing monthly reports to the Board, filing quarterly taxes and generally keeping the books (QuickBooks in today's world) up to date. Thank you, Steve, for your tireless labors over the past many years, and we hope you enjoy your "retirement"!



*We have a goal. Our goal is a mature man of God, who lives in this world in every area of life with all his powers as God's friend-servant, loving God and serving God in all of his earthly life with all his abilities, and who lives in the world to come as a king under Christ, ruling creation to the praise of God, his Maker and Redeemer. – Reformed Education, David J. Engelsma, pg.*

**HOPE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
INCOME STATEMENT**

25%

July - September 2018

|                      | YEAR TO DATE      | PERCENT TO BUDGET | ANNUAL BUDGET       |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>        |                   |                   |                     |
| CHURCH COLLECTIONS   | 9,607.84          | 0.22              | 44,000.00           |
| GIFTS & PLEDGES      | 6,460.00          | 0.02              | 310,000.00          |
| HOPE FOUNDATION      | 20,000.00         | 0.50              | 40,000.00           |
| GYM RENTAL           | 1,355.00          | 0.23              | 6,000.00            |
| SPECIAL ED SOCIETY   | -                 | -                 | 7,650.00            |
| TUITION              | 214,488.09        | 0.29              | 738,650.00          |
| BUS FEES             | 7,661.79          | 0.29              | 26,100.00           |
| MISCELLANEOUS        | -                 | -                 | -                   |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME:</b> | <b>259,572.72</b> | <b>0.22</b>       | <b>1,172,400.00</b> |

|                                 |                   |             |                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <b>GENERAL EXPENSES</b>         |                   |             |                     |
| ACCOUNTING FEES                 | 1,362.95          | 0.23        | 5,800.00            |
| BAND EXPENSE                    | 3,000.00          | 1.00        | 3,000.00            |
| BUILDING AND GROUNDS FUND       | 9,999.99          | 0.25        | 40,000.00           |
| CLASS TRIP FUND                 | 1,500.00          | 1.00        | 1,500.00            |
| EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES AND BOOKS  | 15,000.00         | 0.60        | 25,000.00           |
| ELIM CHRISTIAN SERVICES         | -                 | -           | 500.00              |
| FEDERATION DUES                 | -                 | -           | 1,400.00            |
| INSURANCE, GENERAL              | 2,363.25          | 0.24        | 9,650.00            |
| INSURANCE, GROUP                | 18,851.18         | 0.18        | 107,300.00          |
| INSURANCE, HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT | 999.99            | 0.25        | 4,000.00            |
| INSURANCE, WORKERS COMP         | 560.36            | 0.25        | 2,250.00            |
| JANITORIAL SUPPLIES             | 1,607.41          | 0.40        | 4,000.00            |
| LIBRARY FUND                    | 1,500.00          | 1.00        | 1,500.00            |
| LONG RANGE BUILDING FUND        | 16,250.01         | 0.25        | 65,000.00           |
| MISCELLANEOUS                   | 537.05            | 0.27        | 2,000.00            |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES                 | 187.75            | 0.19        | 1,000.00            |
| OFFICE EQUIPMENT                | -                 | -           | 1,000.00            |
| PAYROLL, BAND                   | 2,025.03          | 0.25        | 8,100.00            |
| PAYROLL, BUILDING MAINTENANCE   | 153.00            | 0.08        | 2,000.00            |
| PAYROLL, CHOIR                  | 1,374.99          | 0.25        | 5,500.00            |
| PAYROLL, DISCOVERY              | 4,539.63          | 0.10        | 46,060.00           |
| PAYROLL, JANITOR                | 7,375.20          | 0.25        | 29,500.00           |
| PAYROLL, LAWN MAINTENANCE       | 1,463.49          | 0.42        | 3,500.00            |
| PAYROLL, LIBRARIAN              | 547.35            | 0.14        | 4,000.00            |
| PAYROLL, OFFICE                 | 5,670.00          | 0.20        | 27,750.00           |
| PAYROLL, SUBSTITUTE TEACHER     | -                 | -           | 2,000.00            |
| PAYROLL, TEACHER                | 128,478.66        | 0.24        | 535,350.00          |
| PAYROLL, TEACHER AIDE           | 463.05            | 0.07        | 6,320.00            |
| PAYROLL, TECHNOLOGY MAINTENANCE | -                 | -           | 3,000.00            |
| PAYROLL TAXES                   | 11,458.96         | 0.22        | 51,500.00           |
| RETIREMENT PLAN                 | 4,500.34          | 0.26        | 17,000.00           |
| PHYS ED UNIFORMS                | 541.50            | 0.68        | 800.00              |
| REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE         | 359.96            | 0.04        | 9,000.00            |
| SNOW REMOVAL                    | 30.00             | 0.01        | 3,000.00            |
| TEACHER DEVELOPMENT             | -                 | -           | 4,000.00            |
| TEACHER CLASSROOM FUND          | 1,000.00          | 1.00        | 1,000.00            |
| TECHNOLOGY SUPPLIES             | 8,000.00          | 1.00        | 8,000.00            |
| UTILITIES, ELECTRIC             | 4,436.57          | 0.23        | 19,000.00           |
| UTILITIES, GAS                  | 168.36            | 0.01        | 13,000.00           |
| UTILITIES, TELEPHONE            | 433.56            | 0.13        | 3,240.00            |
| UTILITIES, TRASH                | 401.13            | 0.24        | 1,700.00            |
| UTILITIES, WATER & SEWER        | 270.53            | 0.21        | 1,300.00            |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL EXPENSES:</b>  | <b>257,411.25</b> | <b>0.24</b> | <b>1,080,520.00</b> |

|                            |                   |             |                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <b>BUS EXPENSES</b>        |                   |             |                     |
| BUS DEPRECIATION FUND      | 6,500.01          | 0.25        | 26,000.00           |
| BUS DRIVER COST SUBSIDY    | 64.00             | 0.06        | 1,000.00            |
| BUS DRIVER PAYROLL         | 3,268.00          | 0.11        | 31,000.00           |
| BUS DRIVER PAYROLL TAXES   | 179.76            | 0.08        | 2,330.00            |
| BUS DRIVER WORKER'S COMP   | 249.05            | 0.25        | 1,000.00            |
| BUS INSURANCE              | 805.59            | 0.24        | 3,300.00            |
| BUS REPAIR                 | (262.28)          | (0.02)      | 11,000.00           |
| GAS AND OIL                | 469.70            | 0.03        | 15,000.00           |
| TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR  | 625.00            | 0.50        | 1,250.00            |
| <b>TOTAL BUS EXPENSES:</b> | <b>11,898.83</b>  | <b>0.13</b> | <b>91,880.00</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>     | <b>269,310.08</b> | <b>0.23</b> | <b>1,172,400.00</b> |
| <b>GAIN OR (LOSS):</b>     | <b>(9,737.36)</b> |             |                     |

## FEDERATION, PUBLICITY, CIRCLE CONTACT COMMITTEE REPORT

Dan Schipper, Chairman  
Ken Engelsma, Phil Kalsbeek

As we have started another school year, our committee, along with our school secretary, Laurel, has been updating pictures and information onto our Hope School website. Our goal is to keep updated information on the site including school activities, events calendar, curriculum, athletics, robotics, photo gallery, etc. If you have not checked it out, please take a moment to do so ([www.hopeprcschool.org](http://www.hopeprcschool.org)).

As a committee we again participated in the Federation of Protestant Reformed Schools Society meeting. The main topic of discussion was the research and development plan of a more thorough training program for our teachers which would provide our schools with a complete systematic and formal training program for teachers in all aspects of reformed education. At this meeting, we had the unique opportunity through modern technology to "skype" with other Protestant Reformed School members who belong to the Federation but are located throughout the United States and Canada. It is amazing to have interaction with members of like-mind and commitment from so many places.

We will soon be meeting with the School Circle officers to go over any new projects that might be coming up during the school year. The School Circle has been a tremendous help throughout the years in providing funds for different projects of the school. They are busy with a variety of fundraisers throughout the school year and these help provide funds for the different needs of the school. They also provide hot lunches throughout the school year, plan the annual Family Fun Night and Teacher "Appreciation" Lunch, along with other valuable labors. On behalf of the board, our committee would like to thank our School Circle for all their work!

The committee will be meeting with staff members soon to determine if there are any concerns or needs they might have, and they are also encouraged to contact us any time if anything should arise that needs attention. Our goal also is to keep our constituency informed as much as possible about Hope School by means of the *Highlights*, special newsletters, blog posts, bulletin announcements, or any other material the board may feel necessary to publish. Above all, we pray for God's blessing upon Hope School this school year.

## ROBOTICS UPDATE

Jon Rutgers, Robotics Mentor

If you haven't heard, there is an annual robotics event among our grade schools called RoBowl. Started in 2014 as a challenge between Heritage & Hope Schools, RoBowl has turned into a five school event with up to 10 teams competing. This has become an annual event held on a Saturday afternoon in November at Hope School. This year we all had a great time with teams from Adams, Eastside, Faith (Randolph), Heritage and Hope who all competed on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

Each of the grade schools listed forms a team or teams of students (typically 7 & 8<sup>th</sup> graders) in the fall and uses the First Lego League competition platform. First Lego League develops a new challenge for the robots each year. Each robot must autonomously complete mission objectives on a standard 4' x 8' table top playing field. Points are awarded for missions accomplished with increasing points as mission difficulty escalates.

In addition to the robot game, teams must also complete a research project on a real world problem as outlined in the First Lego League challenge. These have ranged from how to deal with excess trash in the world, improving how humans interact with animals, and this year's challenge: projects aimed at improving space travel for astronauts. At the RoBowl event each team must give a five minute presentation that describes the problem they chose and the creative solution they have developed. These presentations can include working models, demonstrations and high energy presentations by the students to win over the judges. If you have never attended a RoBowl, I can assure you that this is one of the crowd favorites of the event.

The robotics program gives students a unique extra-curricular activity opportunity. Students work together to solve complex robot problems requiring both mechanical design and computer programming. As the season progresses, the coaches commonly see the teamwork building to the point where the finished product is much more refined than any one individual could have created. The process start to finish is rewarding to witness. Young minds are challenged and the building blocks of complex problem solving are nurtured. Throughout the process the teams have a lot of fun and grow together in their knowledge of God's creation. They look forward to seeing you at future RoBowl events to witness this first hand!



## STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS



### WISE UP AND WAKE UP

Mrs. Deb Kuiper, Discovery Room

There are many benefits of attending the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Convention. Teachers gain knowledge of various subjects, they learn new ways to present material, and they fellowship with like-minded teachers. One of the main benefits each year is the keynote speech. This year was no exception. Rev. Haak began our time together by sharing God's Word on the convention's theme, *Walking Circumspectly*. This theme comes from Ephesians 5:15-16 where we read, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Rev. Haak said he was bringing a wise word to wise teachers. Whenever we stand before the scriptures, we stand at wisdom's gate. He spoke about the book of Job in which we find these words: "Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." We are wise teachers because we have the mind of Christ. Because we have this wisdom given us by God, we must not be intimidated by the world. It is important to be humble and to realize our short-comings, but we do not need to be intimidated by the world's philosophies and ideas.

Rev. Haak gave his speech two points. The first point was Wise Up. In Ephesians 5: 8 the Bible says "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." Because we have been redeemed from darkness, we are not to mingle with darkness. To walk circumspectly really means to walk accurately. We cannot walk accurately if we are not being careful. We must have the mindset that we have been called into light, therefore, we must be careful that what we say and do is appropriate. We must always be conscious that we have young people watching us. Rev. Haak said that the Bible stresses that



children imitate. Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." As teachers, we must realize that our actions make imprints, like footprints in wet clay. There are only two alternatives in our walk. We can walk in the way of light and wisdom, or we can walk as fools in darkness. If we go against God's wisdom, how great is that darkness!

Rev. Haak gave us encouragement in our work as teachers by comparing us to skilled craftsmen commissioned to work on the tabernacle. Just as God gave Bezaleel and Aholiab wisdom to see how all the parts of the tabernacle would fit together (Exodus 36), so he gives us wisdom to see the needs of our students and to bring out the beauty of each child to the glory of God.

Rev. Haak's second point was Wake Up. Ephesians 5:16 points out the importance of, "redeeming the time, because the days are evil." He said the greatest example of wisdom was knowing the value of time. If we are wise, we will know that not only is our time to instruct is very short, but evil is abounding. Every day we have less time than the day before. Every day Satan is happy to use the time that we do not. In this age of technology, both we and our students waste much time on electronic devices. We say our students do well to use their time wisely. The same applies to us. Time for a teacher does not refer to a clock or a calendar, but to the opportunity given to us. Students will never again be the same age as they are today. Right at this point in their lives is the time that teachers have to make a difference, to lead them on the right paths.

The entire Teachers' Convention was beneficial. This speech was a great way to get us in the right frame of mind to learn, and it is a great encouragement for us to continue to work hard throughout the school year.

## THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S

Mr. Dan Hanko, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

*The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength,  
wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.*

*Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting. Psalm 93:1-2*

The Lord is sovereign. He rules over all things. He created the earth and continues to uphold all things by His infinite power. These truths are the foundation of our study of the United States in fourth grade geography. Geography is one of my favorite subjects to teach to my students. I have the time to show my love for traveling and the beauty of the National Parks. More importantly I can show the students the glory of God revealed in all areas of our country.

We begin on the rocky east coast in New England. We see God's providence as he brings the Pilgrims to this land and begins to settle this country. He sent His Word here by those who longed for religious freedom. We travel south into the Middle Atlantic States and focus our attention on God's authority and our duty to honor and obey those whom He has chosen to rule our country from Washington DC. We give thanks to God for our freedom to worship and have our own schools. Continuing south we spend some time studying the states around the Gulf of Mexico. God has made this area fruitful with a long growing season. The hurricanes of the region show us God's power as the winds and waves obey Him who controls all things.

Heading north we get to the familiar country of the Great Lakes. We read of the importance of the bodies of fresh water. We notice the need for water for the early settlers and how they built towns along the rivers. Our need for the Living Water is no different. Without Christ we cannot live. To the west of this region we find the Plains States. We call these states the bread basket of our nation, where corn and wheat grow in abundance. It pictures Jesus as the Bread of Life and how he must be the center of our life. We need this bread to grow and give us strength. The many sunflowers of the area, which follow the path of the sun each day before they mature, also emphasize our dependence on the Christ the Sun. The tornadoes and the ever-present wind of the region also point us to God's power in the Holy Spirit.

The Rocky Mountain Region is our next stop. We stand in awe of God's majesty as we gaze at the sparkling lakes at the base of the mountains. We are humbled as we seem so small in the valleys, viewing the snowcapped peaks towering upward in the clear blue sky. God is our Rock, our shelter in time of distress. He is steadfast and sure, faithful to His promises. In the Southwest region of the United States we find ourselves in a dry and thirsty land. The long stretches of barren land picture the wilderness of sin and affliction. The wickedness of Las Vegas is a reminder of how we must not place our trust in riches and be covetous of the things of this earth. Yet God is there as we stand in wonder at the edge of the Grand Canyon. What amazing strength could form this mighty canyon! Great is His name! We end our travels in the Pacific Coast States. The power of volcanoes and strength in the massive redwoods and sequoias point us again to God. One can hear the ocean's roar and observe the beauty of the mountain ranges. Many lessons learned. All direct us to our God in heaven. May we long to be with Him in perfect glory.



*4<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Writing Samples:*

**Dog Pounds Should Be Banned**

Jenna DeVries

I agree that dog pounds should be banned. First, dogs should not die just because no one picks them to take home. Second, dogs should not have to stay in a cage for twenty-four hours a day but have a place to run. Finally, dogs should be able to swim and play. Dogs are nice and sweet animals, so that is why dog pounds should be banned.

**A School Cafeteria?**

Kohen Hanko

I think our school should not have a cafeteria. First, our school already has hot lunch. Secondly, we would have to pay a lot of money to build a cafeteria. Finally, Hope PRC School would have to pay more to buy the ingredients, so they could make the food for so many students each day. I strongly disagree we should get a cafeteria because we would be spending a lot of money.

### **Dogs Are the Best Pets to Have**

Xander Peterson

Dogs are the greatest pets to have. First, dogs do not make any drops in your house. Second, dogs like to play with you. Third, dogs' fur is very soft. Dogs are the best!

### **Hot Lunch Every Day**

Wyatt Wassink

I agree that we should have hot lunch every day at school. First, I like the food they serve you. Also, it is easier for my mom to pack my lunch. Last, I like that they give you dessert because I do not get dessert that often in my lunch. I strongly agree that we should have hot lunch every day.

### **Fourth Graders Should Not Own a Phone**

Jadon Langerak

I agree that fourth graders should not own a phone. Fourth graders should not own a phone because they would be on their phone rather than doing their homework. They would be calling people they are not supposed to. Kids my age would be doing inappropriate stuff on it. Fourth graders should not own a phone.

### **Classrooms Should Have a Hamster?**

Anna DeVries

I disagree that classrooms should have hamsters. First, the teacher and students would have to pick up after the hamster. Second, the students would get distracted and watch the hamster instead of listening to the teacher. Finally, the teacher and students would have to buy food for the hamster. I believe that classrooms should never have hamsters.

### **California Trip**

Ava Cleveland

Everyone should take a trip to California. California has good restaurants that serve good food. There are cool animals like lizards. Also, there are awesome landscapes with mountains and palm trees. It is sunny and hot for pools even in the winter. Everyone should take a trip to California. It is so fun!

### **Why I Go to This School**

Chase Kooienga

My parents send me here because the school has Christian education. Here we learn about speaking the truth and obedience. School and church teach the same. The Word is taught clearly and correctly. My friends believe the same as I do. The parents built our school wisely. These are the reasons why our parents send me here.

### **Why I Go to This School**

Micah Kuiper

My parents send me here because they want me to learn about God. They also do it because God tells them to in the baptism form. They do it because they do not have the time at home to do it. They want to send me to a school that teaches me the same thing as the

church teaches. We come here to learn and to speak the truth. I must be grateful that my mom and dad send me here.

### **Why I Go to This School**

Nathan DeJong

My parents send me here to learn about God. I came here to study God's Word. If I do not know what something means, then the teacher can explain it better. I am sent here because my parents have a lot of work. At school and at church children should be taught the same.

### **The Importance of the Fountain of Life**

Lydia Minderhoud

On Friday, October 26, Mr. Dykstra spoke on Proverbs 14:27 which talks about the fountain of life. We need water to avoid things like dehydration. We also need spiritual water to avoid spiritual dehydration. To avoid this spiritual dehydration, we should follow Christ as he is the water of life. Satan puts temptations (death snares) in our path. They are not always out in the open. They can be hidden so we cannot see them. As we are in school we are in the midst of death snares, and we see how much of them we encounter in a school day. With the help of our parents, teachers, and ministers we can avoid these death snares.

### **The Fifth Grade Chapel**

Sara DeVries

The fifth-grade chapel was about the fountain of life and the snares of death. Mr. Dykstra spoke in chapel. The fountain of life gives us water. We need water, or we will eventually die. We need water just like we need God's Word. Jesus is the water of life; we need Him. Mr. Dykstra also spoke about the snares of death. Snares are traps. Satan puts snares to harm the church and tempt us to do worldly things. We must depart from the snares of death. We do have to depart often because we are sinners, but God put us in Godly homes, so we can learn His Word.

### **The Stupendous, Awesome, Wonderful Field Trip**

Alanna Kalsbeek

Bravely Malea closed her eyes as Mr. Jamie stuck a rat snake on her outstretched arms. Her classmates watched in awe as the snake climbed up itself. Mr. Jamie's point in doing this was to tell us that this is pretty marvelous. Thursday, October 11, was a special date. This was the day that the fourth graders went on a field trip. Do you know where we went? To the Outdoor Discovery Center. This field trip was a lot about science. We talked about vertebrates mostly.

The beginning of the field trip was spent inside. First, we looked around at the taxidermy. Secondly, we grabbed pencils, papers, and clipboards. Using these we did a scavenger hunt. Then, the last little bit of time inside before lunch was spent with our guide, Mr. Jamie, telling us about vertebrates. This is where Malea comes in. This was when Mr. Jamie told us about rat snakes. They eat rats (obviously), squirrels, mice, chipmunks, and many more creatures.

Right before lunch, we went outside to go on a hike. Mr. Jamie pointed out seeds that smelled like spicy oranges, flowers that smelled like Hershey's chocolate, grasses that had seeds that planted themselves, a pond that was fighting to be healthy, and we heard bird calls. Lunch

was spent inside on carpet squares. After lunch our guide showed us a poisonous tree frog. It had poisonous skin. If a predator put it in its mouth, the tree frog would taste gross.

After lunch we climbed on the bus. We rode to another part of the Outdoor Discovery Center. There we learned about birds of prey. Birds of prey are birds like falcons, hawks, eagles, owls, and vultures. Then Mr. Jamie brought out a red-tailed hawk. This bird was injured by a car that hit its wing. If we let it go into the wild, the bird would soon die because of its hurt wing. The Outdoor Discovery Center is pretty interesting, with lots of activities. You should go there for your field trip someday.

### Up Close and Wild

Harry Langerak

My class went to the Outdoor Discovery Center. It was a very fun place to visit. We went there to learn about vertebrates. Vertebrates are animals with backbones.

We went inside and looked around at the awesome stuffed animals. Then we all went into a room and got a scavenger list. We all tried to figure out the scavenger hunt. We looked at each and every animal. When we were done we discussed the answers. All the animals were so cool!

After that we went outside and walked around through the beautiful trails. We saw a flower, and it smelled like chocolate. Then we went to a pond and saw some fish. Next, we listened to bird calls. After that we looked at birds of prey in cages. All the trails were so cool. The Outdoor Discovery Center was the best place for a class trip.

### INSULTING THE HOSTS

Mr. Brian Dykstra, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

*And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.*

*Genesis 1:16-18*

Max Tegmark is a physicist, cosmologist and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He recently wrote a book, *Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (2017). An excerpt from this book appeared in the November 2017 issue of *Discover* magazine in an article titled, "Our Next Billion Years."

Here's how Tegmark's article begins:

*Thirteen point eight billion years after its birth, our universe has awoken and became aware of itself. From a small blue planet, tiny conscious parts of our universe have begun gazing out into the cosmos with telescopes, repeatedly discovering that everything they thought existed is merely a small part of something grander . . . Although these self-aware stargazers disagree on many things, they tend to agree that these galaxies are beautiful and awe-inspiring.*

*But beauty is in the eye of the beholder, not in the laws of physics. So before our universe awoke, there was no beauty. This makes our cosmic awakening all the more wonderful and worthy of celebrating: It transformed our*

*universe from a mindless zombie with no self-awareness into a living ecosystem harboring self-reflection, beauty and hope –and the pursuit of goals, meaning and purpose. Had our universe never awoken, then it would have been completely pointless—merely a gigantic waste of space. Should our universe permanently go back to sleep due to some cosmic calamity or self-inflicted mishap, it will become meaningless.*

In the rest of the article Tegmark makes some proposals which he claims are not impossible if mankind's progress in science and technology continues at its present pace. For example, to ensure mankind's survival, and, thus, the consciousness of the cosmos, Tegmark dreams that someday, mankind could send space probes to the stars programmed with artificial intelligence. These probes could prepare planets for man's habitation. Men could follow these probes across space and live on the planets prepared for them, or the probes could fabricate people from the matter available to populate other planets. Tegmark speculates man could spread across the galaxy at one-third the speed of light.

Oh, the things men might accomplish in the next billion years! If it weren't for the promise of walking on streets paved with gold, one might wish to be there to witness the marvels of man's achievements.

An unregenerate man gazes at the starry host and sees a place fit for the habitation of man. The universe is so large and beautiful that is a suitable setting for man to pursue his goals, find meaning for his existence and give his life purpose.

Man's pride is so great that he views the universe as being vain and pointless until he evolved enough to take it all in and discover some of its mysteries. It's as though the universe owes mankind a great debt of gratitude since we finally showed up to make it all worthwhile.

Truly, "They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth." (Psalm 73:9) Tegmark has great hopes that man can populate the galaxy with its diameter of thousands of light-years and do so at one-third of the speed of light. Meanwhile, people have actually travelled less than two light-seconds to walk on the moon, and this relatively short trip took three days.

Tegmark refers to the universe as a "mindless zombie." Scripture uses many active verbs when discussing creation, so creation is not a mindless zombie. Just thinking of Psalm 19 we see the heavens "declare;" the days "utter" speech; the nights "show" knowledge; the sun is "as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber." In Isaiah 35 the wilderness is glad and rejoices with singing. The creation also waits for its redemption by Christ so it can be cleansed from the effects of sin.

Also, there is no place in Tegmark's universe for God. The mindless universe simply runs by the laws of physics, not God's "eternal providence and infinite power." (Belgic Confession, Article 12) The unregenerate live in God's creation, then act as though God, their Host, doesn't exist. They help themselves to the food providentially provided, then don't give thanks for it because they think the food comes of itself as the result of the laws of physics.

Tegmark also says there was no beauty in the universe since there was nobody there to behold it. In the text quoted above from Genesis 1, it's clear there was Someone there to behold the universe before man was there, and the Creator's declaration was that "it was good."

Such is the view of the unregenerate. They insult the hosts, both the starry host and the divine Host Himself.

Now it's our turn to consider His heavens.

Since the evening twilight ended thirty minutes ago and the stars are out, let's step outside. For us who live in the middle latitudes, if it's spring we witness the renewal of life which reminds us of the newness of life God has promised us in Christ. If it's summer the coming of night brings relief from the heat of the day, which great heat teaches us of God's hot anger against sin. If it's fall we hear the rustling of fallen leaves which had previously put on such a grand display of God's autumn palette reminding us that the death of God's saints is precious in His sight. If it's winter snow covers the hard, lifeless earth picturing what happens to us spiritually when we turn away from the light of God's countenance. Each season has its lessons, and so do the stars.

Now, let's look up. There they are, the stars! They are "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." (Gen. 1:14) When we consider the vastness of the universe we humbly admit, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. 8:4) Being aware of our utter insignificance, we are deeply gratified to remember that God really does more than merely notice us. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!" (Ps. 139:17) The great God Who formed all the universe merely by His Word and continues to uphold it by His Spirit, is, to our great astonishment, *our* God, and He has made us His children. The great, transcendent Creator is yet immanent enough to take delight in having covenant fellowship with us in Christ.

Tegmark is excited about what he imagines man's next billion years might have in store. Our fellowship with our Father in His beautiful, recreated heaven and earth will last much longer than that, and it will be grander than we can imagine.



*During the first week of school I asked the 5<sup>th</sup> graders to write a paragraph telling me why they were here at Hope School. Here is a sample of what they wrote:*

I am here because I was born to godly parents. They wanted to send me and my siblings to a godly school. My parents also want to send me to this Christian school so I can grow in the knowledge of God. They know there are godly friends here that can give me an example and I can give them an example to be kind to one another. This is a Protestant Reformed School that my parents think is godly. They know this by reading the Bible they also teach me and my siblings the Bible.

~ Raquel DeVries

I am here in a Christian school because it is in God's plan for me to be here. My parents faithfully send us to a Christian school. They don't send us to those free public schools. We are sent to a Christian school so we can learn the word of God. In a Christian school we don't believe in evolution, in public schools they do. We are taught that not every person on this earth is saved. The teachers teach us what the Bible actually says. I am thankful that my parents send me to a Christian school.

~ Annika Kamps

I am here because I was born in a Christian home. My father and other brought me up with God as my heavenly Father. I am thankful for Hope PRC School.

~ Julia Kleyn

I am here in this Protestant Reformed church and school because my parents wanted me to have a Christian education. I am also here because I was elected by God.

~ Ian Cleveland

I'm at this Christian school because I have a Christian family who loves God and did not send me to a public school because they teach things that are not true. I am thankful for having a Christian family and Christian friends who love God and worship him. We worship every day at school and at home.

~ Madison Schwarz

I was born into a Christian family. My parents send me to Hope Christian School because they want us to grow in our knowledge of God. The Bible commands our parents to teach us in a God-fearing way. Christian schools help our parents teach us His Word in every subject. I am glad that I am part of a Christian family.

~ Sidney VanderVeen

I am here at Hope School because my mother and father made a vow to the church when I was born to raise me up in a god-fearing life. My parents picked this school because it's where my dad went to school when he was young. They also picked this school because it is a Protestant Reformed School. They also sent me here because they knew I could find godly friends here. I am very glad my parents chose this school. My parents sent me to this Christian school so I can grow in the knowledge of God. The teachers also teach us about God in every subject.

~ Samantha Meulenberg

## HOW IS IT GOING?

Mr. Jason Boone, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

"How's it going so far?" I wish I could have started counting how many times I have been asked that in the first two months of teaching here at Hope. It is always such a hard question to answer. Normally, I just say that it is going well for the sake of time. But it is a good question to answer more fully as I need to take the time to self-reflect on the work that I have been doing with the students.

Planning and preparing for being the new teacher always takes a lot more time than a teacher who has been through the curriculum several or many times. Some lessons that I think will go great, end up being duds while other lessons that I thought may have lacked in excitement end up creating great discussions. For example, recently in Bible class, we were studying Jesus' miracle of turning water into wine in John 2. We talked about the picture of baptism and how Jesus is the bridegroom to the church. The topic that really sparked conversation however was the question "Was this the first time Jesus performed a miracle?"



We evaluated how Mary told Jesus that the wine was gone and how she seemed to know that he was capable of performing such a miracle. How did she know that he could if she never saw it before? In verse 11, John tells us that "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana..." so the students debated whether that meant it was indeed the first miracle he had ever performed. The debate was left open ended so the students were told to ask the ministers what they thought of this question. There were many hands the following morning telling us what their minister had answered. This was not something that I had planned to be such a huge portion of the lesson but if you want to find out the verdict, you should find a 6<sup>th</sup> grader and ask them. They will probably remember that lesson more than many other lessons.

The class of twenty-five students is a bigger class than I am used to, compared to my few years in Indiana. Managing a bigger class will have its difficulties but I like the challenge. I was warned that this particular class has a lot of personalities in them, most of them being loud. This is not really that surprising considering they are 11 and 12 years old. I recall my youth and remember that I was not so different (you can ask Mrs. Deb Hoeksema if you want proof). So I try my best to come up with ideas on how to keep the students not only motivated but also engaged. What does a loud class want to do most of the time? Talk. So how do I handle it? Give them something to talk about. I love throwing out questions that don't have a simple answer. Look at the first miracle question. Everyone has the first reaction as an answer, but can you prove your answer? Allowing the students to discuss with one another may seem like a noisy solution, but it is effective at allowing students to express their thoughts rather than just answering one hand at a time. Another great motivator is recess. The simple version is taking away recess from maybe those who don't deserve it because they are distracting in class or disrespectful. The much better way is allowing the class to earn extra recess. Now the students are encouraging each other to stay focused, get their books and notes ready, and remain quiet when necessary. It always amazes me how quiet they get when they see their earned recess minutes disappear and they know as a class that they responsible for it.

People always ask if I am acclimating to the new school. I had the students answer this question by having them write about what they are doing, how I am doing, and what they are looking forward to this year. Here are several testimonies:

*At 7:30 Monday morning, as the weekend is slowly slipping from my grasp, my initial reaction is not "yea school!" It is probably more along the lines of "school, hmm..." But as you walk into 6<sup>th</sup> grade with your friends at 8:20 things begin to look up, just a little. Mr. Boone is far from boring. In fact, he fits in quite nicely with our boisterous class. He keeps us entertained with his funny stories and comments and rarely a day passes without laughter and teasing, yet he also, somehow, guides us to where we are supposed to go. I think it is safe to say that we like him, just a bit. – Emma Bosveld*

*I like 6<sup>th</sup> grade a lot. Mr. Boone lets us have fun but keeps us under control, most of the time. We made pyramids in class, it was super fun, hard and delicate work. Every day, Mr. Boone makes us laugh and smile and somedays he gives us discipline when we need it. We all have that old man of sin. The most important part is that he is a godly teacher in our Christian school, and that he is teaching the truth according to the word of God. – Caitlin Brands*

*Mr. Boone is a great teacher. I am enjoying him very much this year. Currently in art we are creating toothpick pyramids. It takes a lot of patience and teamwork but it is rewarding when you get it right. In history, we are learning about Ancient Egypt and their gods. In math, we are learning about graphs and recently made line graphs of our pulse. Mr. Boone enjoys playing*

outside at recess with us. He is a God fearing teacher and is always ready to help a student in need. I hope classes in the future enjoy him as much as we do. I am very thankful for him and his enthusiasm to teach us every day. – Nick Kleyn

When Mr. Boone came to this school, we were all freaking out - what was he going to be like? When he visited us in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we were like "Wow! What a teacher! I can feel the coolness already!" When we finally graduated from 5<sup>th</sup> grade, the summer seemed to take forever. All the girls in my class were like "Wow! He's going to set these naughty boys straight! He is going to be a great teacher!" And he is! Mr. Boone does a great job of keeping us in order, and teaching us the way of the Lord. Although he is sometimes forgetful, he is one of the greatest teachers in the world. – Avery DeVries

Mr. Boone is an awesome fun-loving teacher. We are currently building toothpick pyramids in art. It is fun but takes a lot of patience but it is rewarding. Mr. Boone is fun but he still makes some mistakes in spelling. He has 25 pupils that are eager to correct him. In Ancient History, we are learning about Egypt and their gods. In math we are learning about graphs. Mr. Boone usually plays football with us at recess. Not only is he fun loving but also is a God fearing teacher. I am happy to be a part of this class. – David Langerak

I am always touched by students' responses. I am sure they don't always feel that I am the greatest 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher they ever had, but I really do love being a part of their lives. I am given an awesome opportunity to step into the role of the parent and see each child not only develop mentally, but also emotionally and spiritually. Watching students help one another out, or overhearing some great discussions really excites me. To see God's love reflected in them makes waking up every morning and grading those papers every night worth it. I always try to be a great example, but ultimately I have my own set of failures that the students see and know. They can be so much more forgiving than adults can be. They don't get their forgiveness from my teaching, or even the parent's teaching. That is something that is instilled in them by the Holy Ghost that they have inside of them.

So now you know how I am doing. I am sure I could keep writing but I think I have written enough and I hope that something you read makes you curious enough to discuss it with me or my students. Please continue to give me and all the staff your loving support and prayers. We need it more often than you think.

## **2018-19 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| November 22-23 | Thanksgiving Break         |
| December 13    | Band/Choir Concert         |
| Dec. 24-Jan. 2 | Christmas Break            |
| January 18     | End of 1st Semester, ½ day |
| January 19     | Family Fun Night           |
| February 7     | PTA                        |
| February 14-15 | Parent/Teacher Conferences |
| March 22       | Grandparents' Day          |
| April 1-5      | Spring Break               |
| April 24       | Kindergarten Program       |
| May 10         | Elementary Music Program   |
| May 27         | Memorial Day – No School   |
| May 31         | Last Day of School         |
| June 1         | Hope Classic Races         |
| June 3         | Graduation                 |