



HIGHLIGHTS

~ Thanksgiving Issue 2021 ~



"O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." Psalm 107:1



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



TEACHERS' CONVENTION 2021

Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

Last month well over 100 teachers from across the USA and even Canada gathered at Covenant Christian High School for the annual Protestant Reformed Teachers' Convention. All had a renewed appreciation for the blessings of a convention due to the fact that no convention was held in 2020 due to COVID restrictions.

The theme of this year's convention was "Remember the Days of Old" which was based on Deuteronomy 32:7a, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations..." Prof. R. Dykstra delivered a stirring keynote address based on this text. We are to "remember" because there are dangers to forget and depart from the established purpose and basis of the Protestant Reformed school movement. Following his ministerial instincts, Prof. divided his address into three points. In the first point he highlighted what God has done throughout the history of our schools from their conception to today. The second point emphasized what we have learned about the covenantal foundation of the instruction. And in the third point there was encouragement to prepare for the future, knowing that we live in a lawless age and the end is drawing near. The conclusion? God will maintain His covenant and He calls us to be faithful.

A unique feature of this convention to help us remember the days of old was to assemble a panel of "older" retired teachers (initials: CK, BJ, H(H)M, JH, GK, AL) who were given the opportunity to compare and contrast the function and instruction of our schools in days gone by, to what the Lord is providing today. Instructive words of wisdom were shared. We did miss out on Mr. V. Huber's wisdom as he was absent due to injuries sustained in a fall.

Much of the rest of the convention consisted of hour-long sectional presentations made by members of the PRTI. Prior to the convention presenters prepared a short synopsis of their presentation to whet the appetite of the teachers and to "lure" teachers to attend their sectional. Let me give you just a couple of those so you get just a feel for the content of the many excellent opportunities for teachers to learn, share, and grow.

Phonemic Awareness vs Phonics by Lydya Hulst

I'll share what I use in my Kindergarten classroom to teach phonemic awareness and phonics. If you have a great idea or activity for either one of these, please bring it along to share at the end of the sectional.

The Rediscovered Writings of Mr. Fred Hanko by Brian Dykstra

In the late 1980's, the Federation of PR School Societies began preparing a class for teachers. The intent was to help teachers teach from a distinctly PR point of view. Mr. Hanko wrote several essays on various topics for the Federation. The titles of the essays were: "Goals of Protestant Reformed Education", "Discipline", "Self Esteem: The Problem, Not the Solution", and "Sports and the School Program." What did this veteran teacher who was a part of the beginning of PR education have to say?

Teaching Christianly by Joel Minderhoud

Our task in the Christian day-school is far greater and monumental than merely presenting fascinating information to our students. What is all involved in teaching "Christianly"? We will investigate many facets of what it means to teach "Christianly", with special emphasis on practical examples of applying the Scriptures and biblical themes to our content.

The timing of the convention each October couldn't be better. Students are ready for an academic break after 6-8 weeks of rigorous study, and teachers benefit and are energized and invigorated to return to the classroom with a few "new" ideas and the desire to teach all things in the light of the Word. The Executive Committee will begin soon to plan for next year's convention which Hope School will have the privilege (and work) to host.



FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD



EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott Moelker, Chairman
Dan Kalsbeek, Scott Kooienga, Dave Langerak

The Education Committee is happy to report that classroom instruction is going well so far this year. We are thankful that God has blessed us with covenant children and has given us the means to instruct them here at Hope School.

We reported in our August *Highlights* article that the Ethan Kalsbeek family has not been able to cross the border from Canada. Recently the consulate in Montreal has been closed again which will further delay their immigration request. We pray for patience as we wait on the Lord to make His way plain to us and the Kalsbeeks. We're thankful that Mrs. Val Minderhoud and Mrs. Kara (Minderhoud) Kamps are able to continue teaching 7th grade at this time.

We also reported in August that Dan DeVries asked to be relieved of his position as IT Administrator. The Tech Committee interviewed and hired Hank Vander Waal as his replacement. Hank is familiar with most of the hardware and software being used by Hope School so it should be a smooth transition. The committee reports all other technology needs are being fulfilled.

The Robotics Committee reports that there are 12 students participating in robotics this year. Hope School had the privilege of hosting RoBowl VII. This tournament consists of friendly competition with several other Protestant Reformed Schools. Thanks again to Jon Rutgers and Matt Elzinga for coaching the team and organizing this tournament.

Our band program remains healthy, 17 of 21 fifth graders have elected to participate. The 6th-8th grade band has 36 students. Mr. Elzinga continues to provide excellent instruction, and combined with a good foundational music program in the elementary grades, keeps the enthusiasm for music opportunities at a high level.

Parent/Teacher conferences were held on Thursday and Friday, October 14-15. What a blessing it is when parents and teachers can work together to instruct our children.

The Discovery Center is a way for students to get assistance with subjects when they have difficulties. Jill Reitsma has been settling back into this position after a year teaching 7th grade. We're thankful for her and her assistants: Jen Kalsbeek, Leah Rau and Shari Bosveld.

The Reading Together Program is an assistance program for K-2 students who need a boost in reading. Teachers and the Discovery staff work together to determine which students will benefit from inclusion in this program. Gladys Koole is the chairperson with volunteers Fred Engelsma, Barb Huizinga, Linda Kalsbeek, Karla Kamps and Phyllis King. They are currently giving assistance to a total of ten students.

The Motor Movement program is designed to help kindergarteners improve the coordination of both large and small muscles. Sherry Koole is the chairperson with volunteers: Shannon Bylsma, Carol DeMeester, Lynn Oosterhouse and Cheri VanderVeen. We thank her and these ladies for giving of their time to serve Hope School.

The library is looking great after the remodel. Our librarians, Lorraine DeVries and Mary Kalsbeek, have been working hard to reorganize and revamp the library with the help of others.

What a privilege we as Board members have to visit school and see God's blessing of covenant children being taught by dedicated teachers in the light of His word at Hope School. We thank God for the evidence of His Holy Spirit working in the hearts of our children, as this is being shown in the way they respect and interact with each other in the classroom.

FEDERATION, PUBLICITY, CIRCLE CONTACT COMMITTEE REPORT

Dan Boeve, Chairman
Dan Kalsbeek, Jason Kregel

Our committee met in September with delegates from other Protestant Reformed Christian Schools around North America for the annual Federation Association Meeting. It was held at Covenant Christian's music room with many delegates joining via Zoom. Thirty-two men were in attendance (live and virtual) along with the Federation Board to vote for new board members, approve changes to the Constitution and By-Laws in the Federation Handbook, and approve the budget. In addition, a letter was read from Redeemer Christian School in Zeeland, MI requesting to be accepted as a member of the Federation. It was voted on and approved to accept Redeemer Christian School as a member of the Federation of Protestant Reformed School Societies. It was wonderful to see men from many areas that have a strong commitment to Christian education come together to support the Federation which does so much for our schools.

In September, fellow school board member Scott Kooienga and myself stopped by school at lunchtime and grilled hamburgers and brats for the teachers and staff. We did this to show appreciation for their work and it gave us an opportunity to visit with the staff over a good meal. The school board is planning a number of these teacher appreciation meals throughout the year with different board members participating.

We have been in contact with the special committee organizing the Hope PRCS 75th Anniversary coming up on January 22. They are planning to have a program at CCHS and then an open house at Hope. It should be a great event, so plan to be there to celebrate 75 years of Reformed Christian education.

Our committee is also communicating with the School Circle to pass along potential needs or projects for the school throughout the year. Through their fundraising, they provide funds for projects that are not planned on in the yearly budget or that are of a special nature. The recent Taste of Hope event is an example of the hard work, creativeness, and organization that the School Circle puts into a fundraiser. It was a very enjoyable event showcasing the many culinary talents in our school community. On behalf of the Board, our committee would like to thank the School Circle for the work they do to assist Christian education at Hope.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Brad Vander Veen, Treasurer
Trevor Kalsbeek, Scott Kooienga

Now four months into the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the Finance Committee is busy conducting the important work of caring for the financial responsibilities of operating the school. We'd like to give you a brief update on the work of the committee thus far this year.

Included in this issue of the *Highlights* is an overview of where we stand with respect to our 2021-2022 budget. Please take time to review this. Thanks primarily to the timely (and even ahead of schedule) tuition payments by parents, we are in a good position as far as tuition collection goes. We also have a nice start on the Fall Drive only a few weeks in. We have received 39.6% of our budgeted income for the year, just ahead of the 33.3% we should be tracking at. Thank you, parents and supporters, for your financial support of Hope School this year. Keep in mind we will have a significant income challenge this year due to the drop in enrollment shortly before the school year began. If you are able to give extra towards the Spring and Fall deficit drives this year, that will be of great help. Expenses for the year are tracking slightly under where they should be at 30.4% thus far. As the school year progresses, the committee will be evaluating where we may need to cut expenses in order to maintain a balanced budget.

It's not too late to enroll in monthly tuition EFT if you are interested. There is only a simple form to fill out and the Finance Committee will set up an automatic monthly withdrawal around the 15th of each month. Contact Scott Kooienga if you are interested in setting this up.

Kaptein Dykstra & Company recently completed an annual review of the books and everything was found to be in good order. We are thankful for their services, and also for the diligent work of our financial bookkeeper, Mr. Larry Meulenberg. We also recently completed and submitted the necessary tax filings required by the IRS each year.

As you certainly have noticed, the music room addition and remodel project are nearing completion. There are still a few loose ends to complete, but for the most part the heavy work is done and thus the majority of invoices are in and have been paid. The Building Committee has done an excellent job managing expenses thus far, and all indicators point towards coming in at or under budget. Look for a final update in the next issue of the *Highlights*.

As we reflect on the financial abundance that God has been pleased to give us in our schools and churches, please continue to show your gratitude by supporting the school with your giving and more importantly through your family and personal prayers.

Hope Protestant Reformed School Actual to Budget - Highlights Report

	<u>Jul - Oct 21</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Church Collections	17,879.37	44,000.00	40.63%
Gifts and Pledges	116,755.00	346,000.00	33.74%
Gym Rental	1,790.00	5,000.00	35.80%
Hope Foundation	25,000.00	50,000.00	50.00%
Special Ed Society	2,015.12	7,333.00	27.48%
Tuition	325,449.58	788,661.00	41.27%
Z - Bus Fees	8,664.58	16,000.00	54.15%
Total Income	497,553.65	1,256,994.00	39.58%
Expense			
Accounting Fees	3,850.00	6,450.00	59.69%
Band Expenses	2,000.00	3,000.00	66.67%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	10,916.73	43,000.00	25.39%
Class Trip Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.00%
Educational Supplies and Books	15,000.00	30,000.00	50.00%
Federation Dues	0.00	4,125.00	0.00%
Insurance, General	7,133.50	14,041.00	50.80%
Insurance, Group	30,390.15	106,000.00	28.67%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	185.93	4,000.00	4.65%
Insurance, Workers Comp	1,564.21	2,300.00	68.01%
Janitors Supplies	1,094.26	4,500.00	24.32%
Library Fund	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.00%
Long Range Building Fund Trans	15,000.00	45,000.00	33.33%
Miscellaneous Expense	117.73	2,000.00	5.89%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%
Office Supplies	137.80	1,000.00	13.78%
Payroll - Band / Choir	6,167.50	21,000.00	29.37%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	660.00	1,500.00	44.00%
Payroll - Discovery Room	8,033.00	46,000.00	17.46%
Payroll - Janitor	10,832.00	32,500.00	33.33%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	977.50	4,000.00	24.44%
Payroll - Librarian	574.00	4,200.00	13.67%
Payroll - Office	9,738.75	32,375.00	30.08%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	130.00	1,000.00	13.00%
Payroll - Teachers	186,020.56	599,902.00	31.01%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	2,349.75	16,976.00	13.84%
Payroll - Technolgy Maintenance	0.00	3,000.00	0.00%
Payroll Taxes	15,680.23	58,165.00	26.96%
Phys Ed Uniforms	817.75	1,000.00	81.78%
Repairs and Maintenance	2,584.79	8,400.00	30.77%
Retirement Plan	4,572.51	18,744.00	24.39%
Snow Removal	0.00	3,500.00	0.00%

be wearying. One panelist even admitted that he used to look through the classifieds every February. But in sitting through that sectional and panel discussion, I felt there was something comforting in the fact that this seems to be a universal feeling; most teachers go through times when they question their choice to be an educator. Yet, what I think was also emphasized in these discussions was remembering the joys of teaching – and there are many! While it’s true that I might tend to focus on and remember the negative, each day there are countless positives, too. When I stop to think about it, those are the things I should focus on and remember.

I want to remember the eagerness on students’ faces when we talked about our weaknesses and considered how in heaven we will have no sin. I want to remember the open mouths when we found yet another pattern on the multiplication chart, discussing how God is a God of order. I want to remember the amazement in their eyes when they saw how small Earth is compared to the largest known star, realizing “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm 8). I want to remember how they “knit” their fingers together when we talked about Jonathan and David’s souls. I want to remember their enthusiasm for singing. Their delight in talking about things of the Lord. Their excitement to show me what they know, what they did over the weekend, what little handmade gift they’ve brought me today. I want to remember their laughs, their zeal, their willingness, their silliness. I want to remember the days where I’ve learned more from them than they have from me. That this work of teaching is not just a blessing, but a privilege. Then maybe one day I’ll remember: I really don’t have much to groan about after all.



3rd Grade Student Writing

Did you ever go to the hospital? Well here’s the story of when I went to the hospital. First, we were at our friend’s house, and then we played baseball with their neighbors. Next, I got a really bad stomachache, so we went inside and watched Wild Krats when the grown-ups were by the campfire. I told Mom and then I sat on her lap. Then, we went home. I tried to sleep, but I only got 4 hours to sleep! In the morning at 6:45 Mom and I went to the hospital. Last, the doctor took my blood pressure. I got to watch videos on Mom’s phone. Soon the doctor came in and I was already feeling better! Then we went home, and I had some bacon. That’s the story of when Mom took me to the hospital. – Darla VanDenTop

Have you ever had a random cat in your backyard? Well I have, and this is the story. One day, I was walking in the woods, and my dog was with me. Next, by the trailer I saw a cat. It was black, gray, and white with green eyes. My dog did not bark, she was calm. Then I went to go tell mom. Mom said, “Wow!” I went back to the trailer and the cat was gone! Last, I went inside and had a cup of hot chocolate. I wondered if the cat would come back. That was the story of me seeing a random cat in my backyard. – Finley VanOverloop

Have you ever had a cool way to pull out your tooth? I did. First, I had a really wiggly tooth, and I would not let my Mom pull it out. Next, my Dad thought of a cool way to pull out my tooth. Then, he tied a piece of string to my brother’s waist and the other side to my wiggly tooth and my brother had to run down the hall. But he kept stopping to see if my tooth came

out. So my Dad let Teagan do it. Last, she pulled it out and the string came off the tooth, and we had to vacuum the hall every day to find the tooth. It took one week to find it, but we found it. I put it under my pillow and got one dollar. Next time you have a wiggly tooth you should do what I did. – Claire Feenstra

Have you ever gotten a cat? I did! This is how it went. One day I got home from school, and my sister was very excited for some reason. I asked my mom, “Why?” She said that we were going to get a cat! I was so excited that when we got home I made a bed for him! He was finally here! We all hugged him! You should get a cat sometime too! – Bella Peters

Have you ever made the baseball championship? I have. First, we had to win three games in the tournament to make the championship. The first game we won 8-5. The second game we won 5-3. The third game we won 3-2. Next, we made the championship game. We practiced in the batting cages. Then, the first inning I pitched and struck three people out. The second inning I struck three out in a row. I pitched for 5 innings and I pitched 75 pitches. We won the game 4-3 and we won trophies. I had so much fun at the baseball game. – Austen Veldman

This summer I went to Michigan’s Adventure. First, I got there and I saw a huge roller coaster. When I got there, I went on Wolverine Wildcat. It is a big rollercoaster. While I was on it, my face was white and I almost puked. After that I did not want to go on anymore rollercoasters. Next, after about 20 minutes I went on another rollercoaster. That one went upside down two times and went 70 miles per hour! Then, I came back to the car to eat lunch. I had chicken salad. Last, I went on one more rollercoaster and at the end of the ride it went in a pond! It was very fun. I think you should go there some day! – Silas Rutgers

I went to Craig’s Cruisers with my friend. Have you ever been there? It is fun. We got picked up and played Catch Up in the backyard. We went to Craig’s Cruisers after that. Next, we did mini golf and the arcade and the go-carts were fun too. Then, we went to the ticket shop and I got a bouncy ball, invisible ink, and some candy. Last, we went to McDonald’s and got dinner there and brought it back home, ate it, and played in the basement. That’s the story of when I went to Craig’s Cruisers with my friend. – Gavin Rau

Have you ever thought that a robber would rob you and there would be a fire? I have! One night, I thought there would be a fire and we would be robbed. I was very scared. Next, I yelled to Dad. I was very nervous that he disappeared! Then he came to my room. I was relieved he came. My Dad told me there was no robber or fire. Last, I got to watch videos and I felt better. If you ever think you will be robbed, call your Dad and he will help you. – Jude Rutgers

It was Friday and we were camping at Dunes Harbor. My Dad said it was time for our horse ride. First, I got on my horse, and put on my helmet. Next, we started to ride our horses through the woods. Then, when we got back we went to the waterpark. Last, we ate a snack. I think you should go to Dunes Harbor some day because it is fun! – Ainsley Huizinga

WHICH WORDS WILL YOU USE?

Miss Rebecca Boeve, 4th Grade

Did you know that there are over 1 million words in the English Language? Did you know that most people speak at least 15,000 words in one day? Throughout our day, we are constantly deciding which words we will use, both when we speak and when we write. So, the question is, "Which words will you use?" There are so many options to choose from. We make these decisions without even a passing thought most of the time, perhaps just blurting out what first comes to mind when we let our mouth run ahead of our mind. But what an important choice we are making. Words are powerful! They can be used to praise and glorify God, encourage our neighbor, or to hurt and tear our brother down. Unfortunately, we have probably all experienced the latter and may still be wounded by the lasting effects of those words. And all it takes is one little word, spoken directly to someone or indirectly about that person behind their backs, to cause great harm. So, I ask you again, "Which words will you use?"

The Word of God is filled with instruction about our words and how we are called to use them. Here I provide only a brief list of a few aspects of our words that are covered in Scripture. A further study of Scripture would yield much fruit. Consider these texts:

- What kind of words should we speak? "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." (Eph. 4:29) "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." (Col. 4:6) "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)
- Warnings against improper and wicked uses of our words: "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." (Psalm 34:13) "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." (Titus 3:2) "An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour:" (Proverbs 11:9a).
- The power and importance of the words we speak: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: (Proverbs 18:21a) "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health." (Proverbs 12:18) "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matt. 12:36)

In our classroom this fall, we spent a couple weeks writing poetry. Now many people will immediately grimace when they read the word 'poetry.' To stop my students from having that response and instead encourage and excite them for this unit, I told them that we were going to be playing with words: choosing select words from the millions of options we have to convey a certain meaning to the reader while making that word fit with a specific rhyme scheme or rhythm. We were constantly asking ourselves, "Which words will we use?" From there we would piece together our poems, change some words, then try again. If you had happened to pass by our room during one of those times, you would have heard lots of laughter and cheerful voices chiming in. I hope you enjoy these poems as much as we enjoyed writing them.



4th Grade Student Writing

Diamantes

Shark
 Big, Scary
 Chomping, Killing, Eating
 Predator, Fins, Prey, Scales
 Eating, Swimming, Jumping
 Colorful, Small
 Goldfish
 - Wyatt Jordan

Ice Cream
 Delicious, Cold
 Cooling, Tasting, Loving
 Round, Yummy, Hole, Sprinkles
 Chewing, Frosting, Eating
 Scrumptious, Colorful
 Donut
 - Libby Kleyn

Limericks

There was a young man in New York,
 He wanted a large golden fork
 But he had a spoon
 So, he made a cocoon
 Then he left New York with a spork.
 - Cole Feenstra

There was a boy named Fracksess.
 He couldn't see anything in his classes.
 He got a bad grade.
 "Look what you made!"
 And then he had to get glasses.
 - Triston Koole

There was an old man who had pants
 Which were large and full of ants.
 He ate some fresh pie
 And then told a lie.
 So now all he eats are plants.
 - Zachary Bylsma

There was a man name Phil.
 He met a girl named Jill.
 They married and stayed
 So far far away.
 Then had a son named Will.
 - Alexander Oosterhouse

Haikus

Fall
 Leaves are falling down,
 Rake them into huge piles,
 Fall is very cool.
 - Elizabeth DeBoer

Winter
 Coats, hats, gloves, boots, snow.
 Flowers are dying, Oh Dear!
 ACHOOO! Colds have come.
 - Sadie Meulenberg

Donuts
 Donuts are so round.
 They are good and sweet looking.
 Donuts are good snacks.
 - Harper Kalsbeek

Cows
 I go to the store
 And I decided then cows.
 They were delicious!
 - Reuben Langerak

Acrostic Poems

Giggly
Awesome
Bold
Reminder
Incredible
Excellent
Laughs a lot
Little
Enjoyable
- Gabrielle Langerak

Amazing
Loves ice cream
Enjoys school
eXcellent at reading
And a big sister
- Alexa Schipper

Awesome
Not bad
The cool kid
Hilarious
Outrageous
Not horrid
Young
- Anthony Quenga

Creative
Laughing lots
Adventurous
Silly and smart
Super cool
- Miss Boeve's 4th Grade Class

THE VALUE OF THE GLOBE

Mr. Dan Hanko, 4th Grade

In this age of technology and google maps you might think that a globe collects dust in the corner of my fourth grade classroom. You may assume that my globe has a home only on the piano or the top of a book shelf. This is where you find it if you walk into my classroom after school. But this fascinating, spinning object is more than just a decoration. It is a useful tool found in my hands throughout the year to illustrate the faithfulness and sovereignty of our God. A globe has many uses and a necessary part of some of my lessons plans throughout the year.

I use my globe often at the beginning of the year in my geography classes. Globes are the most accurate representations of the earth God created. This round model displays correct sizes and shapes of the continents and oceans. Students can see and understand the size of the vast oceans compared to the bodies of land. They get introduced to the different hemispheres of the earth and the division of the world into its various time zones. Many students when studying a globe get a better sense of distance and time around the world. When I speak of saints on the islands of the Philippines and countries like Myanmar, Singapore and Australia, students realize the distances that separate God's people. They also get of a sense of importance for our communication today which draws His people together. In a few years this knowledge of a round earth will also help them when they are introduced to the explorers from Spain, France and England who traveled from continent to continent.

A globe is a great visual in science class also. It is great for showing the earth's poles, both geographic and magnetic. With a globe one can easily demonstrate the earth's rotation on its axis and the revolution of the earth around the sun. In our study of Genesis, we note

that a likely effect of the Flood was the tilting of the earth on its axis. This tilting which God ordained helps me explain the seasons here in the United States. Simply put, the tilt of the earth toward the sun and away from the sun give us the summer and winter seasons. Globes should be used in the classroom to emphasize the power and majesty of God. The earth's large size and motion testifies of our great Creator and His providence whereby he upholds all things. The globe is certainly a valuable model for my fourth grade instruction. I end this article with the last stanza of our all school song Psalter #241: "The heavens and earth, by right divine, The world and all therein are Thine; The whole creation's wondrous frame Proclaims its Maker's glorious Name."



Mr. Hanko's fourth graders have written paragraphs on two different topics. For one assignment each child picked a state that he would like to visit. After writing down a topic sentence, three reasons were given why a class trip to that state would be fun. A concluding sentence finished the assignment. The second assignment involved some research for facts on an invertebrate. Each student was to gather information and write a short report. The challenge was to put the information in their own words. You will find a few samples below.

I think our fourth grade class should go to the great state of Wisconsin. We could see a lot of animals in the woods. There is a park called Devil's Lake State Park where we could mountain climb. In the summer we could go to a really cool water park. If we went in the winter, we could see a skiing tournament. We could have a lot of fun in Wisconsin. - Reuben Kuiper

I have three reasons why I want to go to Tennessee with the fourth grade class. We can see the Appalachian Mountains. We can go fishing because there are a lot of lakes. The last reason I want my class to go to Tennessee is because there are a lot of views off cliffs and other places. That is why I want my fourth grade class to go to Tennessee. - Ezra Mahtani

I think the fourth grade class should go to South Carolina. I want to see the view from the Blue Ridge Mountains. It would be fun to play football in the water at Myrtle Beach. I would want to go in the cool waterfalls. We could find very old shells that are on the

coast of Myrtle Beach. That is why I want to go to South Carolina. - Trevor Rutgers

I would like to go to Colorado for a class trip. One reason is because there is the Rocky Mountain National Park. There are really cool sights such as waterfalls, mountains, and cool hikes. Personally my favorite hike is to Emerald Lake. It is fairly long, has cool sights, has rivers along the way and a big area at the end to rest. Best of all there is a big mountain with Emerald Lake in front of it with the reflection of the mountain! These are the reasons why I want to go to Colorado for a class trip. - Nolan Moelker

I think the fourth grade class should go to California. In California there are mountains, but in Michigan there are no mountains. In California there is an ocean that we would like to boogie board. There are lizards that we could catch. This is why the fourth grade should go to California. - Quinton Huizinga

The Praying Mantis
By Cole Doezema

The praying mantis is an amazing invertebrate! They look green or brown. Their size can be as small as one half inch or as large as six inches. They move with six legs. The mantis lives mainly in Southern Asia, much of Africa, and South America.

A mantis eats lots of insects like crickets, grasshoppers, and spiders. Some large ones can eat frogs, lizards, and even small birds. A praying mantis turns color so that predators do not see them. They also have sharp claws on their forearms to catch prey. An interesting fact is that their life span is only one year. There are 1,800 different species of praying mantis. I hope you enjoyed my paragraphs on the praying mantis.

The Black Widow
By Gideon Kuiper

A black widow is a very fascinating invertebrate! They can grow up to one and a half inches long and a diameter of a quarter inch. They are black with designs on their backs. Black widows move with eight legs. They live in Australia, Asia, Europe, South America, North America, and Africa. They do not live in Antarctica.

Black widows are carnivores and suck the blood of other insects, such as flies and butterflies. God created black widows with poisonous fangs to protect themselves. The black widow's venom is 15 times stronger than a rattlesnake's venom! A female black widow kills the male with her poisonous fangs after they mate. The female lays about 200 eggs at a time. Those are some amazing facts about a black widow.

Tardigrades
By Hazel VanUffelen

I think tardigrades are interesting, and I will tell you a little about them. I learned that these creatures are 0.5 millimeters in size. They are so small you can only see them with a microscope. I found out that they have eight legs and small, sharp claws.

Tardigrades can be found almost anywhere around the world. They like to live in the cold. They are omnivores. They spend most of their time snacking on plants. They like algae and such, and they like bacteria. I learned that God made tardigrades so they are able to survive very cold and dry conditions with no water. Without water tardigrades curl up into a dry ball called a *tun*. Their body system will slow down, but they can survive like this for many years. These are the things I know and learned about tardigrades.

LEAVES

Mr. Brian Dykstra, 5th Grade

*. . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
Philippians 2:12*

To the west of the fifth-grade classroom, just outside the classroom windows, stands a maple tree. Mr. E. Bos, our former seventh grade teacher, declared this tree to be one of the most beautiful trees in the world. In the fall this tree puts on a brilliant display of red and yellow. It has never disappointed us. The morning sunlight reflects off the tree and bathes our

classroom with warm, golden light. The already healthy complexions of the fifth graders reflect this light with an amber glow.

Years ago work was done on the old softball diamond near Wilson Avenue. A small grove of trees stood in right field. I could be wrong, but I believe a Hope School dad, now a Hope School grandfather, did some excavating in the little woodlot. Rather than rid the earth of the trees there, I think he transplanted some of the maple trees to the north of school. There were about half-a-dozen of them. One of them stood where the fifth-grade classroom is today.

Back in the day, one could encircle the tree trunks with one's hands. The lone, remaining tree has matured. Its trunk can no longer be grasped by one's hands. The tree now produces an abundance of leaves. They are beautiful, but God's creation ordinance is that the leaves will fall from the tree. The wind traps the leaves in the entry by the fifth and sixth grade doors. I encourage the students not to track the leaves inside, but, despite our best efforts, the leaves enter the building. Students obey when I remember to direct them to pick up the leaves and toss them back outdoors where the leaves can be happy. There's not much that can be done with all the pieces which sneak in, or the leaves which enter when the students leave at the end of the day. I fear this mess will lead to the beautiful tree's demise as the leaves probably complicate the lives of the janitors. Be rid of the tree, and be rid of the mess.

The green chlorophyll in the leaves veil the tree's beautiful fall colors. The colors have always been there. We just have not been able to see them. What brings out the colors? Summer does not bring out the glorious colors. Life is "easy" for the tree then. Summer days are hot, and the nights are warm. Plentiful sunlight floods the tree's foliage, and the leaves happily go about their business of synthesizing sweet sugar for the tree.

Fall arrives. The hours of sunlight decline, as does the angle of the sun's rays. There's not enough light for the chlorophyll to make food. The tree is better off without chlorophyll, so it disappears, and the colors emerge. The tree slowly adorns itself in bright red and yellow. Then frost appears for the first time. As life becomes difficult and hard for the tree, its colors are worked out.

That's life. There are periods in our lives when the days pass in a procession of the warmth of God's gracious countenance. I know, life is never unalloyed joy. After the fall God said that the ground is cursed so that ". . . in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." (Genesis 3:17) However, comparatively, there are times when we are in the summertime of life. Life is good. The problem is, prosperity can cause us to become complacent. We take God's blessings for granted, and we can even fall so far as to think we deserve more. We don't show the glory of God within us. Instead, we congratulate ourselves with how well we are doing. We live as David before his lamentable fall, taking it easy in the palace. We think that, after all, we've earned this! Our love for God has frosted over in ingratitude.

Then God graciously chastises us. He withdraws the bright light of His countenance. Our sins have hidden His face from us. (Is. 59:2) God sends affliction because we have gone astray. This is how God brings us back that we keep His word and walk with Him. (Ps. 119:67)

At times we pass through the fall of life. Many of our families have had loved ones pass away. Those dear to us in the Hope School community have passed away, and others now deal with cancer and illnesses. The hardships of the fall season of life are real. Afflictions provide us an opportunity to reassess what is truly important to us.

God uses all this for our good. We realize we've become worldly minded. We haven't valued God's Truth as we should. We have taken our inheritance of the Reformed faith for

granted. The glorious colors of salvation which God has placed in our hearts, have been hidden behind a green veil of worldliness. God uses the hardships in life to dissolve the green of our worldliness, revealing the glorious colors of His gracious salvation. We've been called to work out our salvation not with ease and carelessness, but with fear and trembling.

I'd like the tree outside the classroom to be allowed to stay. It really is beautiful. However, I'd much rather see our children be as beautiful trees which bear fruit for the praise of God's name because these covenant children are planted on the banks of the river of life, whose roots drink deeply of the living water of the gospel of grace.



Fifth Grade Student Writing

I Thessalonians 5:18 says, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." We are supposed to give thanks in everything we do. We are to be thankful even in tribulations like it says in Acts 16:25, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God." We should be thankful, even in prison. - Oliver DeMeester

I am thankful for siblings to play with and laugh with, and a baby brother to hold. - Mayla Mahtani

I am thankful for the Christian Schools that we can go to learn about Christ. I am also thankful for the friends that we can play with to have fun. - Ben Engelsma

I am thankful for the Christian schools and churches that we are a part of. The Christian schools teach students about God and other things, even though the need for teachers is great. The Christian churches teach people of all ages about God. Also, the need for ministers is great. We have been going through hard times in the churches and schools. - Anthony Kregel

I am very thankful to God for our Christian schools and churches, because we were not able to go to them for a time. I am also thankful for parents who let me go to this Christian school and church. - Sonya Minderhoud

I am thankful for discipline. Discipline from my parents helps me not think I can do anything I want. I'm also thankful for God-fearing churches that I can go to, and God-fearing schools that help me make my friends. - Dane Meulenber

I am thankful for God's creation. I am able to live here on earth with a Christian family. God shows us the beauty of the earth, especially this time of year with the leaves changing colors. Always be thankful for all the privileges God gives to you as a Christian here in His creation. - Hannah VanderVeen

I am thankful for our freedom in worshipping God. I am thankful for that because many people don't have that freedom today. Sometimes we take this for granted. - Aubrey Rutgers