

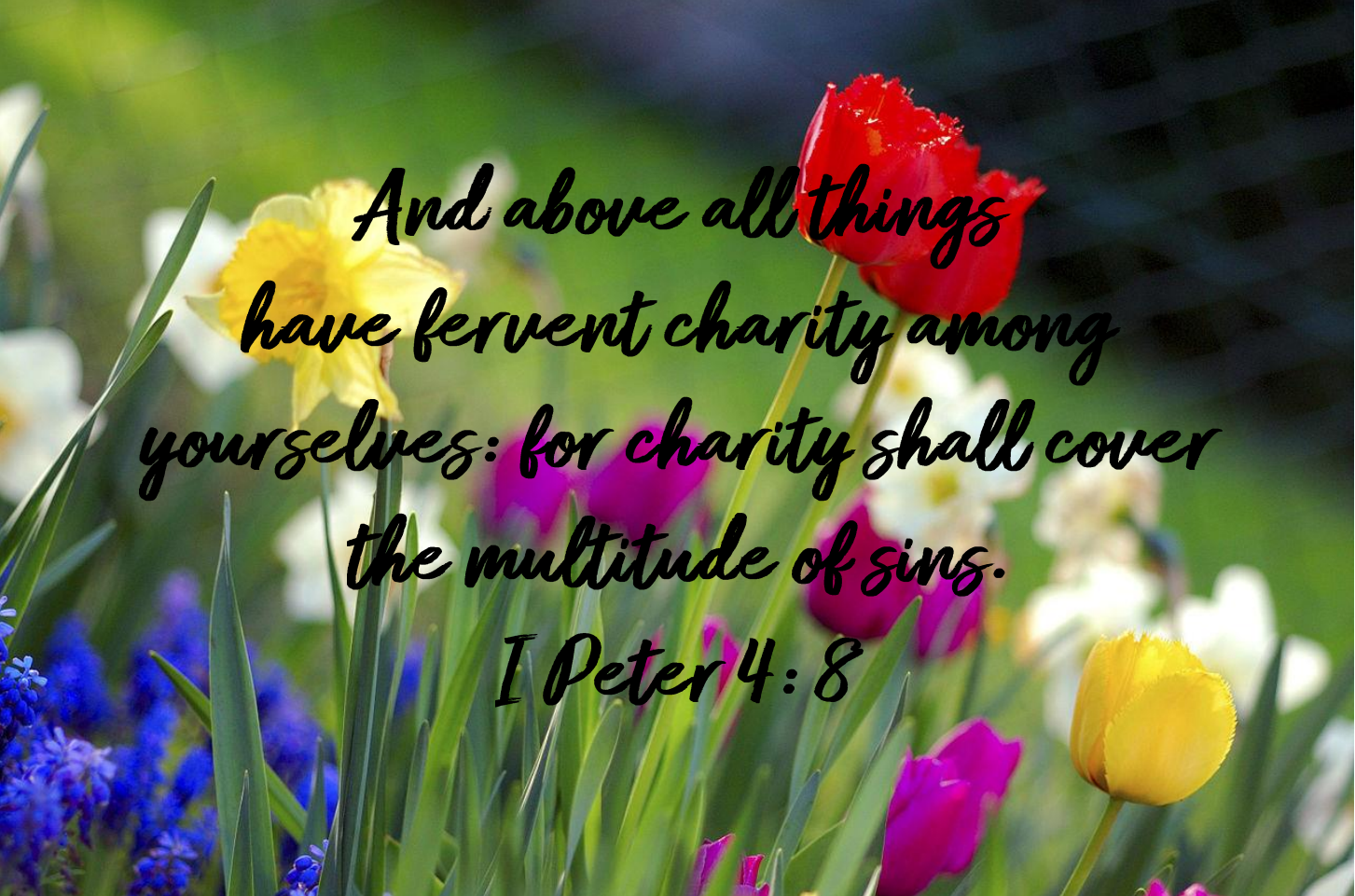


HIGHLIGHTS

Spring Issue

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March 2022



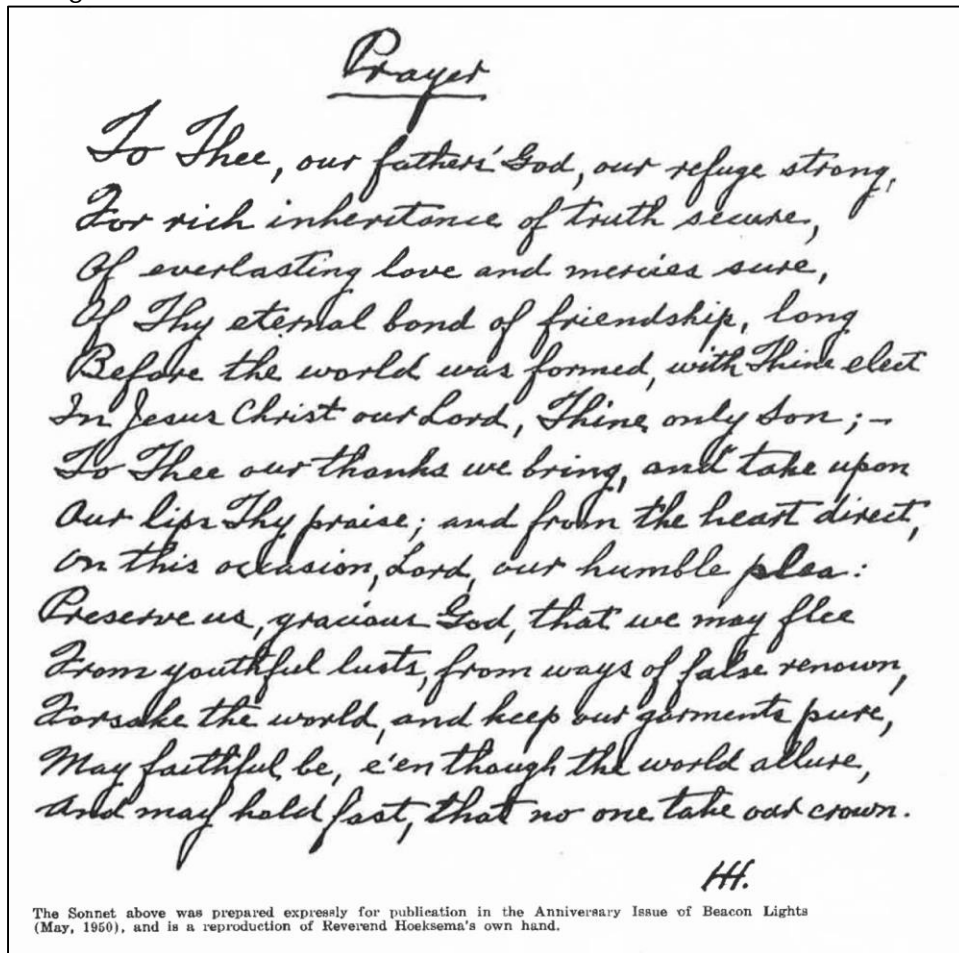
*And above all things
have fervent charity among
yourselves: for charity shall cover
the multitude of sins.*

I Peter 4:8

"PRESERVE US"

Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

The title of this article is taken from a sonnet entitled, "Prayer", written by Rev. H. Hoeksema which he prepared expressly for publication of the Anniversary Issue of Beacon Lights (May, 1950). However, I found it printed in the "Anniversary Booklet" published in 1950 on the occasion of the twenty-five-year jubilee of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America (1925-1950). Read it for your edification as here it follows reproduced in Rev. Hoeksema's own handwriting.



The 25th Anniversary Booklet contains the fascinating history of the first twenty-five-year history of the PRC, complete with so many wonderful pictures of consistories throughout the denomination during those years. Many of the last names of these consistory members can be found in families still in the PRC today, but many others sadly have left and departed. And so the prayer today still applies, "Preserve Us".

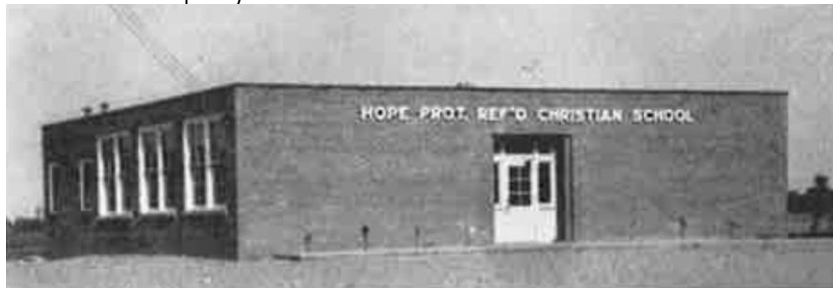
One of the sections written by Rev. J. Heys, and found in this anniversary booklet is entitled "Our Christian Schools...giving instruction according to the truth taught in the Protestant Reformed Churches." In light of our own celebration of 75 years, it is enlightening to read what others wrote about the Protestant Reformed school movement 50 years ago.

After writing about the vow Protestant Reformed parents take at baptism, Rev. Heys wrote: *"It was likewise to be expected, therefore, that in order to fulfill this promise the members in these churches would in time establish and maintain Christian schools of their own wherein their children might be taught all things in the light of the teachings of Holy Writ and might receive a world and life view based upon the truth of Scripture. Loving that reformed truth, it followed naturally that they should desire to have their children taught all things from that viewpoint. A world and life view based on anything else than the pure teachings of the Scriptures is not only worthless, it is positively deceptive, dangerous and a denial to one degree or another of the glory of the All Glorious God Whom we are called to serve in every phase of our life and Whom we are to see in all the works of His hands."*

Now fifty years later the evidence of these same desires and expectations of Protestant Reformed parents can be validated by the establishment of many Protestant Reformed grade schools and high schools across the country. But in 1950 there were only two elementary schools in operation (Redlands and Hope School). Two more (Adams Street and Free Chr. School in Edgerton) were set to open their doors that fall.

About Hope School, Rev. Heys penned the following: *"The School at Hope is of more recent origin. A school society was formed in March, 1946 during the pastorate of the undersigned. A school building was erected the following year. Classes were first held in September of 1947. It is now a three room school giving instruction in the first nine grades. In the three years of its existence it has seen eighteen graduates from the ninth grade. The enrollment averages sixty-five pupils a year, and by means of a bus parents of our neighboring churches are able to send their children for instruction according to the doctrine we love. The school is built on an acre of land directly behind our church edifice."*

These pictures accompany the article:



Miss Alice Reitsma



Mrs. A. Van Solkema



Miss Jessie Dykstra

Yes, Hope School has grown both as far as the number of students and teachers is concerned, and the building has been enlarged and renovated several times over. God has been faithful to us. May our prayer continue to be "Preserve us, gracious God".

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott Moelker, Chairman

David Langerak, Dan Kalsbeek, Scott Kooienga

Since we last wrote to you in the November *Highlights*, several items can be reported.

In January the Education Committee began looking toward the 2022-23 school year by conducting annual interviews with our teachers, advertising and interviewing for openings in our teaching staff, and reviewing the budget line items of this committee.

As is our yearly practice, during three evenings in January, we met with each teacher, as well as our administrator and secretary, to conduct annual interviews with a view to renewing contracts for the coming school year. This good practice of meeting with our staff also provides an opportunity for the Board, through its committee, to express our appreciation on behalf of all the parents for their faithful labors. The committee had a very profitable time with the teachers and staff and are deeply thankful to God for providing these Protestant Reformed teachers who stand in our place each day.

The theme for the interviews was, *75th Anniversary of Hope School*. Psalm 145:4, "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts." Our teachers really appreciated the celebration event and some commented that they were surprised by the large number of graduates who went up to sing. They also acknowledge that the children attending Hope School are declaring God's greatness and sing of His righteousness.

We report that all of our teaching staff, our administrator, and secretary are planning to return for the 2022-2023 school year. We express our thanks to these dedicated men and women who strive daily for the cause of God's covenant in their daily occupation.

In response to our advertisement for a 7th grade homeroom teacher, we interviewed two highly qualified applicants. The Board plans to offer a contract to one of these applicants on April 1 which is the Federation guideline date for offering contracts to first year teachers. Our present 4th grade split class (27 students) will be joined to make one 5th grade class next year under Mr. B. Dykstra's instruction. Several of the subjects, including math and reading, will yet receive split instruction with the assistance of Miss B. Boeve and Mrs. J. Reitsma. Miss Boeve will also be taking on a good portion of the Discovery Room responsibilities along with Mrs. Reitsma. Miss Boeve graduated with a minor in Special Education Studies and we feel is well qualified to carry out the work of our Discovery program.

We thank our robotics team mentors, Jon Rutgers and Matt Elzinga, for capably coaching the robotics teams this year. The two Hope robotics teams finished the 2021 season on November 20 with RoBowl VII hosted at Hope School. The event was well attended with 10 total teams competing. 5 from Heritage, 2 from Hope, 2 from Adams & Faith Randolph. The final point totals for the robot portion resulted in 2nd & 3rd place for the two Hope teams. Our mentors were pleased with the students' performance and both our teams showed excellent progress through the year. Jon has informed us that he will not be returning to robotics this fall. We thank him for 8 years of mentoring students in robotics since its first year at Hope in 2014.

The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills were administered to grades 1-8 in January. We administer these tests once every two years, and they compare our students to students around the nation taking this particular test at this time of year. These tests serve as an evaluative tool to examine the curriculum as well as the strength and weakness of the individual students. The overall

school scores this year didn't reveal any weaknesses in the curriculum. The 7th and 8th grade scores, as in the past, are very good, indicating that throughout the entire curriculum (1st-8th), the basic skills are being addressed. Our Discovery staff also use the results of these tests to help determine which students might need additional testing and/or services. The individual results have been shared with parents at Parent/Teacher Conferences. This helps parents know in which areas they could possibly provide more help at home. It also shows how God has given to some more ability than others. We shouldn't expect high scores from every student. We expect students to make use and develop the gifts that they have been given to the glory of God, and that they do their best.

Pray for us Board members that we continue to be faithful and dedicated to our work. Also, pray that we might make wise decisions to the glory of God and to the furtherance of his kingdom.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott Moelker - Chairman

Trevor Kalsbeek, Brad Schwarz

Dan Kalsbeek - Supervisor

Our buses are still operating well. Thanks to our drivers for doing this work without a major incident so far this year. Bus ridership is low this year and we don't anticipate much change next school year. Bus 15 has 17 riders and Bus 16 has 13 riders. It hardly seems worth having the buses running for so few riders. However, at this time we plan to continue offering bus service. School buses provide the safest means of getting students to and from school, and the recent significant increase in fuel cost may cause some families to consider using the bus service to reduce their costs, which should reduce fuel use collectively.

The committee considered the possible replacement of bus #15, as it's nearing the end of what we consider average service life, and the funds are available. We suggested to the Board that we keep this bus in service for at least another year, maybe longer. The mechanics who service it say it's in good condition and agree that it could be run a few more years. It only puts on 12,000-13,000 miles a year and the body is still in decent condition, but will need some rust repaired over the summer.

We also suggested to the Board that the budget for bus replacement fund be reduced for at least a year.

Notes:

Bus #15 is a 2014 with 105,000 miles.

Bus #16 is a 2017 with 53,000 miles.



FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Brad VanderVeen, Treasurer
Trevor Kalsbeek, Scott Kooienga

The Finance Committee continues to meet every month, counting and recording all of the income received. This issue of the *Highlights* contains a financial summary as of the end of February. The end of February puts us 2/3 of the way through the fiscal year, therefore we expect that revenue and expenses are tracking at approximately 67%. The bottom line shows our income at 73% of budget, and our expenses at 61.5% of budget. In spite of a tuition deficit “headwind”, our financial position is good thanks to prompt tuition payments and an overwhelming Fall Drive.

The building project has been completed with only a few minor items remaining. A brief look at financials shows that the Building Committee and general contractor did an excellent job of working within the budget. The total funds approved by the society for the projects was \$1,134,500. The total expenses of the project came in at \$1,072,039. Thank you to all those who volunteered time or donated materials to the project.

Over the next few months, we will be conducting the Spring Drive. The total drive amount collected through February is \$291,715, with an annual drive goal of \$346,000. Information related to the Spring Drive will be sent out soon. The Finance Committee is looking to exceed our annual drive goal in order to soften the impact of the tuition deficit. (*Note: our actual tuition revenue this year will be approximately \$687,527 compared to the initial budgeted amount of \$788,661.*)

We would like to remind all tuition-paying families that their last tuition payment should be made in May. All tuition should be paid by June 1. We continue to email tuition statements every month, shortly after each Finance Committee meeting. Please review your statement closely to make sure that you are on track to have your last tuition payment in the office before the 1st of June. For those families taking advantage of EFT payments, the committee will adjust your last payment so that you end the year with a zero balance. If you have any questions or concerns regarding tuition payments, contact a member of the Finance Committee.

We are very thankful that the financial picture for Hope School remains sound, and we thank God for the means to support our schools.

2022-23 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 29, 2022	First Day of School
September 2-5	Labor Day Break
October 6	PTA
October 13-14	P/T Conferences
November 24-25	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 23 – Jan. 2	Christmas Break
January 20	End of 1 st Semester
February 9	PTA
February 16-17	P/T Conferences
April 3-7	Spring Break
May 29	Memorial Day
June 1	Graduation/Last Day of School

Actual to Budget. July 2021 - February 2022	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Church Collections	38,272.51	44,000.00	86.98%
Gifts and Pledges	291,715.00	346,000.00	84.31%
Gym Rental	3,896.00	5,000.00	77.92%
Hope Foundation	25,000.00	50,000.00	50.00%
Special Ed Society	5,681.16	7,333.00	77.47%
Tuition	540,127.82	788,661.00	68.49%
Z - Bus Fees	13,041.26	16,000.00	81.51%
Total Income	917,733.75	1,256,994.00	73.01%
Expense			
Accounting Fees	5,150.00	6,450.00	79.84%
Band Expenses	2,000.00	3,000.00	66.67%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	848.27	43,000.00	1.97%
Class Trip Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.00%
Educational Supplies and Books	30,000.00	30,000.00	100.00%
Federation Dues	3,616.89	4,125.00	87.68%
Insurance, General	10,953.53	14,041.00	78.01%
Insurance, Group	58,465.50	106,000.00	55.16%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	3,000.00	4,000.00	75.00%
Insurance, Workers Comp	1,927.38	2,300.00	83.80%
Janitors Supplies	2,813.12	4,500.00	62.51%
Library Fund	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.00%
Long Range Building Fund Trans	30,000.00	45,000.00	66.67%
Miscellaneous Expense	4,840.53	2,000.00	242.03%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%
Office Supplies	905.42	1,000.00	90.54%
Payroll - Band / Choir	13,506.82	21,000.00	64.32%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	1,015.00	1,500.00	67.67%
Payroll - Discovery Room	23,436.75	46,000.00	50.95%
Payroll - Janitor	21,664.00	32,500.00	66.66%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	1,989.00	4,000.00	49.73%
Payroll - Librarian	2,184.00	4,200.00	52.00%
Payroll - Office	21,586.25	32,375.00	66.68%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	540.00	1,000.00	54.00%
Payroll - Teachers	381,751.68	599,902.00	63.64%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	7,881.25	16,976.00	46.43%
Payroll - Technolgy Maintenance	0.00	3,000.00	0.00%
Payroll Taxes	33,598.20	58,165.00	57.76%
Phys Ed Uniforms	817.75	1,000.00	81.78%
Repairs and Maintenance	4,269.35	8,400.00	50.83%
Retirement Plan	9,461.78	18,744.00	50.48%

Snow Removal	427.50	3,500.00	12.21%
Teacher Classroom	1,500.00	1,648.00	91.02%
Teacher Development - Y/E	10,225.71	12,000.00	85.21%
Technology Supplies	13,900.00	14,000.00	99.29%
Utilities, Electric	13,993.76	23,000.00	60.84%
Utilities, Gas	4,345.24	13,000.00	33.42%
Utilities, Internet & Phone	2,605.10	3,000.00	86.84%
Utilities, Trash	1,257.26	1,700.00	73.96%
Utilities, Water & Sewer	936.22	1,300.00	72.02%
Z. Bus Expenses			
Bus Depreciation Fund Trans	11,666.64	17,500.00	66.67%
Bus Driver Cost Subsidy	614.00	1,000.00	61.40%
Bus Driver Payroll	15,571.00	22,918.00	67.94%
Bus Driver Payroll Taxes	981.97	1,700.00	57.76%
Bus Driver Workers Compensation	837.87	1,000.00	83.79%
Bus Insurance	1,625.50	2,100.00	77.40%
Bus Repair	3,511.69	7,000.00	50.17%
Gas and Oil	7,671.63	11,000.00	69.74%
Transportation Supervisor	625.00	1,250.00	50.00%
Total Z. Bus Expenses	<u>43,105.30</u>	<u>65,468.00</u>	<u>65.84%</u>
Total Expense	<u>773,718.56</u>	<u>1,256,994.00</u>	<u>61.55%</u>

STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

"HE LEADETH ME"

Mrs. Susann Grasman, 1st Grade

He Leadeth Me, one of the hymns that was chosen recently as an all school number, has always been one of my personal favorites, as I find that the words speak right to the heart of the Christian. After having sung this hymn so many times with my students while I teaching them the words, I decided to learn more about the background and history of this hymn. I found it to be quite interesting and beneficial and desire to share some of what I learned.

The author of *He Leadeth Me*, Joseph Gilmore, was a Baptist minister and seminary professor. The year was 1862, and the Civil War was raging all around when Rev. Gilmore was asked to preach at the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. He writes "I set out to give the people an exposition of the 23rd Psalm. I had given this exposition on three or four occasions previously, but this time I did not get beyond the words "*He Leadeth Me.*" Those words took hold of me as they had never done before, and I saw them in a significance and wondrous beauty of which I had never dreamed. So greatly impressed was I with the blessedness of divine guidance that I made this my theme." Later after the church service, he was visiting with friends when the conversation turned to his sermon and he began to scribble down the lines to this hymn. He later said "At the close of the service we adjourned to Deacon Watson's pleasant

home. During our conversation, the blessedness of God’s leading so grew upon me that I took out my pencil, wrote the text just as it stands today, handed it to my wife, and thought no more of it.”

Well, Joseph Gilmore may have thought no more of it, but not so his wife. Taking matters into her own hands, Mary Gilmore, without his knowledge, sent the verses her husband had written to the *Watchman and Reflector* magazine where it was printed the following year. Three years later, Joseph Gilmore traveled to Rochester, New York, in order to preach. Upon entering the chapel, he took up a hymnal only to open it to *He Leadeth Me*. This was the first time that Rev. Gilmore knew that his written lines had found a place in the hymnal. Put to music by the well-known composer William Bradbury, the hymn that we know today was created. Joseph Gilmore believed that the dark days of the Civil War led him to focus on the guidance and leadership of God, prompting him to write: “It was the darkest hour of the Civil War. I did not refer to that fact—that is, I don't think I did—but it may subconsciously have led me to realize that God’s leadership is the one significant fact in human experience, that it makes no difference how we are led, so long as we are sure God is leading us.” The same is true today, as we live in perilous times and desperately need the leadership of our faithful Saviour. May our confession always be “His faithful follower I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.”



Following are writings from the 1st graders.

Ps. #418 is one of my favorites. It tells about praising God. We clap our hands and spread them out when we sing it. We praise Him because He is King.

~ Nora VanOostenbrugge

I like Ps. #400 because it is about praising God. We should praise Him for everything that He has given us. I like the tune because it is happy.

~ Benjamin Huizinga

We are singing Ps. #403 in music class. It teaches us that God builds His church. God cares for the wounds that are not feeling so good. He counts the stars at night and His wisdom is unsearchable.

~ Miriam Koole

I like Ps. #418 because it is a happy song that teaches us about God and how to sing to Him.

~ Hannah VandenBerg

My favorite song is Ps. #113 because it teaches us to be friends with the poor and weak. The song is a great song for us to hear because it tells us that God is our friend. He loves us and we love Him.

~ Lily Heyboer

My favorite song is *Crown Him With Many Crowns*. I picked it because it teaches us that we must obey God and because we sang it in the all school program.

~ Myla Veldman

I chose *The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock* because I like the hand motions in it. It teaches me to build my house on God and not on the sand.

~ Ava Meulenberg

I like the tune of Ps. #378 a lot. Its words say that God’s grace abideth forever.

~ Henry Rutgers

I like Ps. #52 because God is always with me. We love Him and we go to church to praise Him. It teaches me about Jehovah and that God leads me where ever I go.
~ Natalie VanderVeen

My favorite song is Ps. #187. It teaches us to love and be kind. It is a nice song that talks about singing praises to God.
~ Lyndi Mahtani

I choose *Seek Ye First* because it tells me about God's kingdom and His greatness.
~ Bella Feenstra

I choose Ps. #418 because it is a happy song. We sing this song at school.
~ Judah Miersma

My favorite song is *Seek Ye First* because it teaches me that God cares for us and His people. I think that the chorus is pretty.
~ Paige Schipper

I like *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* because I like the tune and the chorus. I like to do the hand motions with Ps. #418.
~ Casen Meulenberg

I like *Seek Ye First* because it teaches us about God. I like to practice *Seek Ye First*.
~ Hoyt VanOverloop

I chose *Seek Ye First* because it teaches me to put God's kingdom first. When we die He will bring us into His kingdom.
~ Benjamin De Vries

My favorite Psalter number is 200. It teaches me that Christ is our King and that He rules over us. He has dominion.
~ Clara Rutgers

My favorite song is Ps. #418 because I like to do the hand motions when I sing it. It is about praising God.
~ Brooklyn Kregel

My favorite Psalter number is 52. I like it because it teaches us that we are God's sheep and that He is our shepherd. I really like the words and it has a happy and pretty tune.
~ Teagan Feenstra

My favorite Psalter number is 322. It tells children how they should direct their way. But it is not only talking to children, it is talking to grownups, too. The answer to the question is Jesus.
~ Alexa Feenstra

My favorite song is *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. It teaches us about God's greatness and it has a nice tune. We sang it in the all school program.
~ Clara Kregel

I chose *Jesus Loves Me* because it teaches me that Jesus loves me and that He will take care of me. It also teaches us that since Jesus loves us we should also love other people.
~ Cole Huizinga

My favorite song is *The Wise Man Built His House Upon A Rock*. It teaches me that just going to church is not enough, we have to trust in God.
~ Charlie Kooienga

My favorite song is *Jesus Loves Me*. He loved us first and then we love Him. He died on the cross to save us from our sins.
~ Aaliyah Peterson

PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

Mrs. Julie Schwarz, 2nd Grade

As children of God, we are pilgrims on this earth. Our journey is not easy. We have many trials and temptations. Satan works very hard to lure us away from our heavenly Father. What a comfort it is to know that God will not let one sheep of His be lost. However, this does not mean that we live as we please with no thought to Satan's power. In I Peter 5:8 we read: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour..." We are engaged in a continual battle and we cannot fight in our own strength, but in God's strength. This is made clear to us in Paul's letter to the church of Ephesus. In Ephesians 5:11 we are told to put on the armor of God.

The Bible uses many earthly pictures to help us understand things of heaven and here we have the picture of a soldier. Being a Roman citizen himself, Paul would have been very familiar with Roman soldiers and their weapons. Roman soldiers had to be fit, well trained in using their weapons, and very disciplined. When Paul wrote to the Ephesians he was a prisoner in Rome. He most likely had Roman soldiers standing guard over him. He would have seen many soldiers stationed throughout the city. Paul may likely have seen soldiers training in their armor and practicing their skills with their weapons. Paul uses this example to instruct the church how she must be prepared for her spiritual battle.

The Roman soldier had several pieces to his armor that would help keep him safe in battle. His armor included a special belt. This belt kept his equipment in place and was designed to hold his weapons. He had a breastplate and a helmet that would protect vulnerable parts of his body. The shield, too, protected the soldier. The shield had many uses. The shield would deflect fiery darts. These were arrows dipped in oil, then lit on fire, and shot at the enemy. The shield was curved so a soldier could hide behind it to protect his body. Also, many shields held together formed a protective roof over the whole group of soldiers during an enemy attack. A soldier had special shoes. The bottoms had metal studs, like cleats, to help him march over rough ground and support his feet in battle. Finally, a soldier carried a sword. This was an important weapon. The soldier needed to be trained in using it properly and needed to keep it clean and sharp, ready for battle. Each piece of this armor was important and it would have been extremely foolish for the soldier to go into battle without every piece.

Reflecting on how important this armor was for the Roman soldier, we can consider what Paul is telling the child of God. We, of course, do not put on heavy metal equipment, nor do we have guns, swords, and spears, to go forth in battle. We have something far more powerful and that is the armor of God. In fact, when we go forth in God's armor we are assured of victory. How foolish, then, to go forth in our own strength.

There are several parts to this armor of God. First, Paul speaks of truth. We need the truth. Without truth we only have the lies of Satan. In John 1:6 Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." If we do not have this truth, the rest of the armor would not matter. We have the breastplate of righteousness. We are made righteous in Christ. When we live righteously, then our hearts are protected from Satan's fierce attacks. The Christian who knows the word of God but lives an unrighteous life will be severely wounded by the enemy. The gospel which is the good news of our salvation gives us peace. When we have the peace of knowing our sins are forgiven and we belong to God, we are prepared to face the battles of this life. We are ready to march into battle. Paul speaks of the shield of faith. Is our faith strong?

Do we trust in the Lord and His promises? Will our shield deflect the darts of Satan? Faith is a gift from God and this faith is strengthened through our study of God's word and as we use it in battle. Our 5th piece of armor is our helmet of salvation. We have hope. We know we will spend eternity with Christ in heaven. When we live in this consciousness, we will not fall prey to the evil temptations. Finally, we have the sword of the spirit. This weapon is a spiritual weapon that is more powerful than any earthly weapon. Just as the Roman soldier was to be proficient in handling his sword of steel, Paul tells the child of God to be proficient with his spiritual sword. This spiritual sword is the word of God. Every spiritual warrior needs to be trained in handling this sword. Our swords must be kept sharp and cleaned. Our Bibles cannot sit gathering dust on a shelf but we must study them. We must know God's word, walk in His word and trust in His word. Just reading the Bible and knowing what it says is not enough. We must meditate on this word and live in it.

Just like the Roman soldier, we need to wear every piece of our armor. Satan will look for any weakness and attack us there. The Holy Spirit living in us enables us to wear this armor and fight. How thankful we are that our Lord is already victorious over this mighty foe. We do not have to wage this war on our own. When we are fully armed with the whole armor of God, then we will be able to stand victorious.



Following are samples of writing that the 2nd graders have done throughout the year.

CREATIVE STORIES

In the Cold

By: Lucy VanUffelen

Once in a little town called Mareda lived two little children. Their names were Kaley and Dan. Their Pa and Ma had died and where they lived it was cold. They were trying to get to their aunt's house. First they tried a train but the train got stuck in snow so they had to walk. It was cold and Kaley said, "I am scared!" Dan said, "Don't be scared we will make it." It was getting late and they found a cave. They stayed there for the night and in the morning they started traveling again. When they got to their aunt's house, she gave them a hot drink.

Lost in the Woods

By: Bridget Kleyn

Joe, Lucy, Sue, Ruby, and Sarah are our bunnies. I was at my house in the middle of the night. Suddenly, I dashed outside and I looked in the den for the bunnies. I called for Ruby and I did not see her come. So I called her again and she still did not come. Then, I went back inside and went to bed. Next I woke up at 6:00 and I went outside with Dad. We went to the den for the bunnies and I told Dad that Ruby was lost. Dad said, "We have to find her soon." So we went inside to tell all the rest of the kids. Then we went outside and when we were outside we told them that Ruby was lost. When we were looking for Ruby, we saw her drinking from the creek. Then, we took Ruby and brought her home and gave her lots of food and she ate it all.

The Robber

By: Grady Hanko

I was home alone and I was in my room when I heard glass break so I peeked out of my room and saw a robber climbing through the window. I grabbed the phone from my mom and dad's room and hid in their closet. I called 911 and I told them that a robber broke into my house and I told them to hurry up and arrest the robber and bring him to jail for 10 years. Five minutes later I heard 15 sirens outside so I opened the window and punched the screen out and jumped through the window. I went to the police and watched them arrest the robber and he was brought to jail.

Lost in the Woods

By: Kenzie Huizinga

On a cold winter night in December, Sara sat by the table eating dinner. Her dog Lucy plopped down begging for food. Sara was 8, Lucy was 2. Mom said to Sara, "When you're done eating dinner give your scraps to Lucy and eat your snack." Sara finished her dinner, gave her scraps to Lucy, and ate her snack. Then she brushed her teeth and changed into her pajamas. It was 8:00 when Sara went to bed. Sara slept downstairs and Lucy slept by Sara on the back of her bed. At 8:37 Lucy crept through her doggy door and into the woods. When Sara woke up the next morning she was surprised to see Lucy gone. Sara hurried to get dressed and ran downstairs. "Mom," said Sara, "have you seen Lucy?" "No," said mom. "I have not. Sorry!" Sara ate breakfast and went outside to look for Lucy. "Lucy! Lucy!" yelled Sara, but Lucy did not come. Sara went inside to get a drink. When Sara came back outside, there was Lucy sitting on the porch. "Lucy!" cried Sara. Sara brought Lucy inside and hugged and kissed her. Finally she fed her.

The Lost Bird

By: Cienna Jordan

Once in the forest there were two birds. The first bird was the mother bird. The second bird was the baby bird. One day the baby bird got lost. The baby bird remembered to stay still. Then the mother bird woke up and she could not find her baby. She looked and looked but she could not find the baby. She asked the spider if he had seen a baby bird but he said, "no" then she asked the hedgehog who also said "no." Finally the mother bird asked the bunny who said "Yes, she is in the forest." Then the mother bird found her baby bird. The End.

The Talking Spider

By: John Kalsbeek

One sunny day, I grabbed my spy glass and yelled, "Mom, I am going for a walk!" and ran out the back door. I ran into the woods. This time, I went farther than I usually do. Suddenly, I saw a small, old house. I went up to the door and peeked in. Nothing. I slowly opened the door. There, on the floor, was a big dusty chest with a note, Do NOT Open! I knocked on the chest. There was a faint sound. I took my magnifying glass and looked the chest over. On the back, I saw three small lines. I thought it looked like a tiny door with no hinges. I hit it with my fist. Then, I noticed a tiny handle. I pulled it and it popped open. Then I slammed it shut and ran home. I brought a bucket of baseballs and started throwing them at the chest, hoping to break a hole. I went back to the door and put my hand in. I touched a fuzzy thing. I yelled

“eeeekkkk!” Suddenly I felt something hard. It was a large key. I quickly tried to open it. But, it did not open. I threw another baseball at it and this time, it opened and inside was a huge spider, and it said, “Thanks for letting me out!” The End.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

When I Was Sick

By: Ruby Wassink

Have you ever had hand, foot, and mouth disease? When I was a baby, my mom noticed that I had sores in my mouth and it did not feel good. After a few days it felt a lot better. When I cried, my mom tried to give me a mint but it did not work. Finally I felt better and my mom was very happy. I hope you do not get sores in your mouth.

The Fourth of July

By: Lucy VanDenTop

Do you like the Fourth of July? I do! One Fourth of July we went to a parade and we got a lot of candy. We went home and ate some delicious candy. After that we went to a friend’s house and we swam in a pool. We ate dinner. Dinner was so good! After dinner we watched cool fireworks and ate buttery popcorn. Finally we went home and had a great day.

Going to Dune Harbor

By: Daniel DeBoer

We were going to Dune Harbor and I could not wait! We had to pack all our clothes and other stuff and then it was time to go. We left and Dad went first and Mom went behind. It took two hours and we were there. I was so happy we made it! We had to unpack our stuff and then we went to Grandma and Grandpa’s motorhome. We had a fun time there. We colored and we played games. About seven days later we went to Silver Lake. We went on the dunes with dune buggies. It was fun because my Dad went fast. Then we went swimming and we ran up a very steep dune. Some of my aunts were sitting on top of the dune, so we left and rode our boat back. We had an amazing time at Dune Harbor. It took us two hours to get home. We had lots of fun on vacation.

The Best Spring Break

By: Rielle Doezema

One morning my mom told me that we were going to Florida. I jumped up. I was so glad. After my Mom closed my room door I could not sleep. I woke up in the middle of the night. Next we packed a lot of luggage. Early in the morning we got on the road and drove for two days. Finally we got to our condo. I was so glad! I got in the water right away. I jumped high in the air and the water made a loud sound. It sounded like this: whoosh! Whack! Ka-bam! I hurt my tummy. After that, I was okay, and I had the best vacation ever.

Going to Colorado

By: Barbara Quenga

Have you ever been so happy when your parents told you that you were going to go on vacation with them? That’s what I felt like when my parents told me that we were going to Colorado. I

was so excited! The next day we packed up our stuff. Then we got in our car and drove to the airport and got on a plane. When we were on the plane and looked down we saw fields that looked like fields on a map. When we got to the hotel, we unpacked and took a nap. When we woke up, we climbed a mountain and came back to the hotel. I can't wait until I can go again.

OPINION PIECES

Christmas is my favorite holiday. I like Christmas because I get to open presents. Presents are fun because I get cool stuff. One of my presents was a helmet. I like setting up the Christmas tree because we get to help do the Christmas tree and we help put the presents under the Christmas tree. I like to skip school because we get to play games at home. My favorite game is Sorry. I like spending time with my family because I like to sit by mom because she tickles me. It was fun. I hope we can have it next year. ~ Beckett Veldman

I think my birthday is the best because I get presents. When Ledger and Sawyer are napping, I open my presents so it isn't too loud. I get cupcakes at Meijer before my birthday. I love that Mom and Dad get me cupcakes. Then I get to go out with my family to eat. It is fun because I get to order whatever I want to eat. After that, I get to go to Grandma and Grandpa's house to open the presents they gave me! I get good presents! My birthday is fun and cool! ~ Brynlee VanOostenbrugge

Do you like Christmas? I do! I like Christmas because we get to go to Grandma and Grandpa's house. Then we eat ham and potatoes and corn with gravy and after we eat we go to the living room and open presents. Sometimes I get what I want. My brother and I take turns opening presents. But the best thing ever is to go to church and listen to the Gospel. Christmas is the best holiday. ~ Emma VanSlambrouck

Valentine's Day is the best. On Valentine's Day I love to give candy to my classmates. I love to eat the candy that my classmates give me. I also love Valentine's Day because it is a surprise and I like surprises on Valentine's Day. We go to my Grandma's house and play games and have lots of fun. I think Valentine's Day is the best. ~ Haley Miersma

I love Easter. I like Easter because I get to go to my Grandma's house and I get to play with my cousins. I also like it because Grandma gives us chocolate bunnies. Then we play games and it is fun. Then we have to go home and when we get home we have to go to bed. That's what I like about Easter. ~ Seadon Kalsbeek

Do you like Christmas? I do! I like it because I got to set up the Christmas tree. Another reason is I get to open presents. This year I got a Michigan football. And I got much more! I also like Christmas because I get to open stockings. This year in my stocking I got football gloves and now I can play football with my dad! Another reason is to look at Christmas lights every Sunday! I also wish I had my own Christmas lights! Christmas is my favorite holiday. ~ Nick DeVries

Do you like Easter? I do! We get chocolate bunnies and little peeps on Sunday. Blitz never gets the peeps or chocolate bunnies. We eat them after church. I eat my peeps first and then my chocolate bunny. I love my treats. They are the best. Blitz never goes to church. We get to paint eggs! Blitz never gets to paint eggs. I am having the best day ever! Happy Easter, Blitz!

~ Jolee Schimmel

GOD'S ALMIGHTY HAND

Mrs. Stephanie Daling, 6th Grade

I Peter 5:6-7 reads, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." We live in very anxious times. We and those all around us are experiencing all kinds of challenges, trials, problems, situations, and circumstances day after day. With everything that we see going on in the world, and because of our sinful human nature, it is no surprise that we can tend to have these feelings of fearfulness or anxiousness.

Yet, God tells us in His Word that He hears our cries and helps us in our time of need. In Psalm 46:1, God reminds us that He "is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." In our own strength, we lack the resources and abilities to meet these challenges we face each and every day. We must remember that in every aspect of our life, in every time of difficulty or pain, we are not alone. Jesus reminded His followers and us of that in His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:25-34 when he tells us to "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink.... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." God promised to never leave us or forsake us – Joshua 1:9 – "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

In I Peter 5, Peter tells us to humble ourselves under God's almighty hand, believing that He will lift us up in due time. We are called to cast our anxiety on Him because He cares for His people. A believer's life must be characterized by humility in every aspect – Proverbs 3:34 – "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly." Humility and anxiety cannot exist together, they are like fire and water. As a result, God calls us to come to Him for help. There are over 140 verses in the Bible that tell God's people not to worry, not to be anxious, and not to be afraid. We must give our cares over to Him, for He alone can take care of what trouble is at our doorstep. It seems so simple!

However, we still stumble, we will fall, for we are sinful creatures. But Peter is reminding us here to come to God in prayer, for prayer is the epitome of dependence and humility. We have a remedy for all anxiety, and that is to petition our Father in prayer. We must come to Him believing that He will help us through our trials – Romans 8:28 – God promises that all things work together for good to those that love Him. He may not come when we want Him, but He is always on time according to His divine plan. And so, we pray that God will work humility not only in us but in our students also, that we may be clothed with it. Knowing and believing that we have the comfort that God gives grace to lift us up and carry us through all that comes our way during this earthly pilgrimage. We are not in this fight alone – Psalm 121: 1-2 – "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth."



The 6th grade students are involved in many different forms of writing throughout the school year, but we have recently been looking at poetry. They have written diamantes and limericks. The limerick poems tended to be their favorite, as they could be a bit sillier with them. Each limerick poem must consist of five lines. The first, second, and fifth must rhyme with each other, as should the third and fourth. The first, second, and fifth line also must have three beats, whereas the middle two have only two. Their favorite part was that the fifth line is typically funny or does not make sense at all! For example:

*There was a young fellow named Hall
Who fell in the spring in the fall.
'Twould have been a sad thing
Had he died in the spring,
But he didn't – he died in the fall.*

Here are a few of the 6th grade limerick poems!

*I have a grandma named Donna.
I go to her house when I wanna.
She likes to cook
Or read a book.
She spends lots of time in the sauna.
- Kara Bleyenbergh*

*One day I went to school.
I thought I was so cool.
My teacher was cruel.
So I sat on a spool,
And a bunch of food made me drool.
- Colton Huizinga*

*There was a mean fellow named Jerry.
He was sweet on the girl Alaina Berry.
She was pretty as a dove;
They soon fell in love,
But then she fell for little Larry.
- Danielle Bylsma*

*There was a man on the street.
He always liked to cheat.
When we played a game
He played very lame.
Until one day he got beat.
- Jacob Huizinga*

*There was an old guy named Jay
Who took his young son to the bay,
To have supper with Stan.
For food Stan served a can.
He ate it – it was clumpy clay.
- Jacob DeBoer*

*There is an old man in red.
Who took great delight in being fed.
He liked eating cake,
And liked to bake.
But soon enough, it went to his head.
- Ondra Kalsbeek*

*There was a man named Joe.
He had a pet called a crow.
Wherever Joe went,
To the store he spent,
65 grand on the crow.
- Ellery Engelsma*

*There once was a man from New Guinea.
He jumped on his horse with a whinny.
The horse looked around
Said "This man makes me frown",
And tossed him right off with a whinny.
- Daniel Langerak*

My grandma is very neat.
She is good at making meat.
My grandpa is cool.
He even has a pool.
My grandparents are savory sweet.
- Ruby VanUffelen

ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

Friday, April 29 – 7 pm

Grandville High School
Auditorium

READ-ALOUD REVIVAL

Mrs. Jill Reitsma, Discovery Center

Have you ever completed a long journey with your family, yet no planes, trains or automobiles were required? In fact, leaving your house wasn't even required unless you sat under a tree or around a campfire. A journey that took you over more than a million words? A trek on which you traveled every chapter and every word *together*?

It is called reading aloud!

Reading aloud, especially to our children, is a skill worth developing. An investment in reading can be priceless for all those involved. Put life on pause, sit down, slow down, and enjoy reading aloud to your children or grandchildren. The joy you will experience to be present, engaged, and learning in these moments will create memories for years to come.

There are life lessons in reading aloud for everyone involved. You have the opportunity to mediate, pause and give context, stop and explain, answer questions and ask how the children's minds and hearts are receiving the story. Most of all, being there, you will be able to discuss the story with Christian eyes, ready to highlight the truth of the gospel and how it applies to our lives. After all, reading aloud is a Christian pastime. It has been critical for centuries in how the people of Christ heard His voice. Christ has spoken to his people across history through the reading aloud of Scripture, at the heart of the gathered assembly of the church. The apostle Paul wrote his letters to be carried to the churches and *read aloud*. So too, the apostle John wrote down his apocalyptic vision, anticipating its reading aloud (Revelation 1:3)

Reading aloud builds our kids' vocabulary, sharpens focus, strengthens listening skills, increases comprehension, provides a model for fluency, promotes critical thinking skills and develops oral language. Another important pathway in reading aloud is to match books to the level (maturity) of your child's understanding, vocabulary level, emotional and social development.

It is not too late, no matter the age of your school age children to take up this journey. My husband read to our children well into their high school years. It is still something they talk about around the table when they come for dinner. It doesn't have to take hours of time, unless you can't put the book down because it is so interesting and enjoyable. Just twenty minutes a day and you will see the benefits for both you and child. I encourage all to not miss the important teachable moments altogether. The crowning jewel of reading aloud is not "Lowry, Dahl or Paulsen." It is God. All along, from board books to storybooks, to reading the REAL THING, we are training our children to hear the very words of God himself in Scripture, and receive them in joy.