



HIGHLIGHTS

*~ Thanksgiving Issue ~
2022*



*And let the peace of God
rule in your hearts, to the which also
ye are called in one body;
and be ye thankful.
— Colossians 3:15*



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



PRTI TEACHERS' CONVENTION 2022

Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

When the annual school calendar is published, all note that there are two days in October marked "Teachers' Convention – No School". For some families, this is a time to schedule one last camping vacation. For many children these days provide a break from school work and a short return to that "summer freedom". But for over 180 teachers, it is the opportunity to gather with other Protestant Reformed teachers from across the country. The Teachers' Convention provides an opportunity to grow and also be refreshed.

This year Hope School had the privilege of hosting the PRTI Convention. I say "privilege" with the understanding that hosting a convention makes for a couple busy days for many at the hosting school. Meeting rooms must be assigned, seating must be arranged for full group sessions, sectional presentations, and meal times. Food for meals and coffees must be purchased, prepared, and served. (A special thanks to many ladies who carried out those details). In our modern age, it is also necessary to make sure the sectional presenters have all the technology equipment they need. (Special thanks to Matt Elzinga for caring for those details). Notwithstanding, it was a privilege for us to host this year to showcase our new music room and extensive renovations of the offices, library, and lounge. We received favorable comments from many attendees and the facilities were put to good use. The host school for the convention is scheduled by rotation. Usually the convention is held for three consecutive years in Grand Rapids and then one either in Indiana, Wisconsin, or NW Iowa. Next October, Faith Christian School in Randolph, Wisconsin will be the host school, DV.

The theme of the convention this year was "Encouraging our Covenant Soldiers" based on Deuteronomy 20:1-4. Prof. D. Kuiper, who delivered the opening keynote address on this theme, referred to this passage as "Israel's military manual". Israel was about to begin the conquest of Canaan and they needed encouragement. The enemy was intimidating from many points of view. They were well trained with much military equipment (horses and chariots), they were many in number, and they were fighting on their home territory. Why should Israel not be afraid? Moses reminds the people what the Lord had done in the past. He had brought them out of Egypt. And now Jehovah God would go with them to fight these enemies.

So too the training of the covenant youth in today's world may seem intimidating. The enemies, empowered by Satan, seem so overwhelming. The openness of sin and lawlessness pervade our society. The enemy has infiltrated the church, and also in our homes we (parents) are not always as vigilant as we ought to be. And add to that, the enemy controls the entire educational system in the US. But we are not to fear. In the midst of all this, teachers (parents) and the covenant youth need to be encouraged. We must recognize and teach the children that we are in an intense battle. We must be assured that Jehovah is with us. We must be proactive – teach, teach, teach – by showing the wonderful works of God in the past and in creation. We must not depart from using our military manual, the Word of God. And believe that God uses means to accomplish His will. We were encouraged!

The majority of the rest of the convention involved teachers teaching teachers and encouraging one another. There are hour-long sectional presentations throughout the

remainder of the two-day convention. I pick out a few to give you a flavor of the content of these presentations. The ones chosen were presentations by teachers from Hope.

Classroom Discipline by Brian Dykstra

A presentation of some thoughts on the foundations of discipline, some doctrinal issues involved in discipline and applications to the classroom with a look at texts regarding discipline from Proverbs.

Utilizing the Different Learning Styles by Jill Reitsma

See how you can use the three learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) throughout the day to keep your students engaged in their learning. Some participation is needed and you will leave with a few manipulatives for your classroom.

Integrating Creativity and Picture Books into All Content Areas
by Gayle Lotterman and Randy Kuiper

Two teachers, two topics, it's a two-for-one sectional! Join us as we discuss the importance of integrating picture books and art projects into other content areas. We will present different ideas of how we have formed cross-curricular connections in our classrooms through literacy and creativity. We will also display many books we love to use in different subjects and show student samples of art projects we've completed with our students. Additionally, we can help you brainstorm adapting these for your grade levels. Come ready to discover and share strategies for integrating reading and art throughout core subject areas!



FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD



EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott Kooienga, Chairman
Matt DeBoer, Dan Kalsbeek, Dave Langerak

With thankfulness to our faithful Father in heaven we are able to report that things have been going very smoothly this year. One hundred eighty-eight students from seventy-three families have entered the halls for covenantal instruction. God's blessings are rich in abundance, and we give Him all the praise for this.

Part of the responsibility of the School Board is to perform regular classroom visits. So far this year on two separate occasions, eight classrooms have been visited. These visits are reported on at the regular board meetings and are a very enjoyable part of the work of the board members. We are happy to report, it is evident that God has richly blessed us with teachers and staff who love our covenant children and desire to lead them in good Christian instruction each day.

One big change this year was Becca Lubbers moving from regular classroom teaching to full-time in the Discovery Center with Jill Reitsma. This change has been a very positive improvement for the Discovery Center. With the help of Jen Kalsbeek and Leah Potjer as aides in Discovery, the students are receiving the academic support they need. In addition to aides

in Discovery, the kindergarten children are enjoying Claire DeVries, Carol DeMeester, and Leigh Kooienga as aides on alternating days in that class.

Once again Matt Elzinga is leading our children in developing their talents of music through the instruments of band as well as choir. This year twenty-one of the twenty-eight 5th graders are in band, and forty-three of the fifty-eight 6th-8th graders are in the junior high band. It is encouraging to see that almost 75% of students in 5th-8th grade participate in the band program. As one of the recent classroom visitors, it warmed my heart to walk the halls in the morning hours and hear the different classes practicing their songs in preparation for the all school program. We are thankful for the night of praise which took place on November 18.

The robotics team worked hard this year and again there were enough students to have two teams. Matt Elzinga and Becca Hoeksema, a senior at CCHS, were the mentors for the teams this year, with Matt DeVries also assisting. RoBowl VIII took place on Saturday, November 19. Students from Hope, and other of our PR grade schools put their preparation and skills to work in this robotic competition. Who were crowned as this year's champions of the RoBowl? Watch the school memo for details.

Other events happening this year for students to compete in include the Zaner-Bloser Penmanship Contest and the PR Grade School Spelling Bee. The penmanship contest is open to all students in K-8 and entries are judged on shape, size, spacing, and slant. Prizes for the students and their school are awarded to the winners. This year a PR Grade School Spelling Bee will be held on March 9 at 4pm at Adams Christian School. The top two spellers in each of the 4th-8th grade classes will be participating in this enjoyable event.

Hope School was chosen to be the host of this year's PRTI Teachers' Convention, held October 20 & 21. There was a great turnout for the convention and many of our own teachers led sectionals and presentations. We are thankful for the dedication of our teachers and staff who were willing to give of their time to attend and participate in the convention.

It is our prayer that God will continue to bless the labors of us as parents, board members, teachers, and staff as we continue to train up the children in the fear of His name. *"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."* Hebrews 13:15

FEDERATION, PUBLICITY, CIRCLE CONTACT COMMITTEE

Dan Boeve, Chairman
Joel DeVries, Dan Kalsbeek

On September 21, our committee met 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 eighteen men attending in person and fourteen men joining via Zoom. The President of the Federation Board this year is Marc Scholten and the Executive Director is Kyle Bruinooge. The business at hand was routine in that we voted for new board members, heard the annual Executive Director's report, and approved the budget. We also approved Derek Van Overloop as the new Technology Director. 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.

Another area of responsibility that our committee has is updating and maintaining the content on the school website. Every summer we review the content and note changes that need

to be made. Since our committee may not always have members that are tech savvy, we rely on our webmaster and school secretary, Laurel Lotterman, to make the actual updates. We would like to thank her for the work she did this summer on the website.

In September, school board members Scott Kooienga and Matthew DeBoer stopped by school at lunchtime and grilled hamburgers for the teachers and staff. The school board does this to show appreciation for the teachers' work and it gives them 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.

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. This summer, the lockers and benches in the lower elementary hallway were replaced. The School Circle provided funds for this project and helped pay for the new copiers which were purchased recently. 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, Chairman
Scott Kooienga, Josh Meulenberg

We are already four months into the 2022-2023 fiscal year, and with this issue of the *Highlights* the Finance Committee can provide a good look at the financial status of Hope School. We are happy to report that many of the line items are right in line with our approved budget amounts. A brief review of the financial statement will show that on the income side we have a healthy margin over our expected target (38.9% vs 33.3%) and on the expense side we are tracking slightly below the expected target (31.9% vs 33.3%). Thanks to the parents for paying tuition on time, and to our supporters for their generous giving in church collections and in the fall drive thus far.

Speaking of the fall drive, the letter and form were sent out in October, and we collected just over \$60,000 in the first few weeks! Lord willing, we would like to collect \$173,000 in the fall which is half of the \$346,000 target. Please continue to support the drive as it is nearly 30% of our annual budget of just over 1.2 million dollars. The drive allows us to maintain reasonable tuition rates for families while giving opportunity for all covenant believers to assist in Christian education. Please give as you are able.

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 a member of the Finance Committee if you are interested in setting this up.

Kaptein Dykstra & Company recently completed an annual review of our financial records 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.

We thank God for providing the means to finance Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School. Please continue to pray for God's blessing on all our Christian schools.

Actual to Budget. YTD October	Total	Budgeted	%
<u>Income</u>			
Church Collections	18,596.07	46,000.00	40.4%
Gifts and Pledges	77,510.00	346,000.00	22.4%
Gym Rental	1,345.00	5,000.00	26.9%
Hope Foundation	25,000.00	50,000.00	50.0%
Special Ed Society	1,833.02	12,074.00	15.2%
Tuition	336,515.81	737,570.00	45.6%
Z - Bus Fees	10,025.24	14,950.00	67.1%
Total Income	470,850.14	1,211,594.00	38.9%
<u>Expenses</u>			
Accounting Fees	1,300.00	6,450.00	20.2%
Band Expenses	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	872.06	43,000.00	2.0%
Class Trip Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.0%
Educational Supplies and Books	15,000.00	30,000.00	50.0%
Federation Dues	0.00	4,168.00	0.0%
Insurance, General	7,071.00	14,118.00	50.1%
Insurance, Group	33,141.67	95,000.00	34.9%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	1,500.00	4,000.00	37.5%
Insurance, Workers Comp	1,309.28	2,620.00	50.0%
Janitors Supplies	728.17	4,500.00	16.2%
Library Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Long Range Building Fund Trans	7,500.00	22,500.00	33.3%
Miscellaneous Expense	459.88	2,000.00	23.0%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,500.00	0.0%
Office Supplies	146.28	1,000.00	14.6%
Payroll - Band / Choir	7,067.12	21,000.00	33.7%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	1,244.00	2,250.00	55.3%
Payroll - Discovery Room	16,821.18	67,600.00	24.9%
Payroll - Janitor	11,168.00	33,500.00	33.3%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	2,232.50	4,200.00	53.2%
Payroll - Librarian	826.50	5,200.00	15.9%
Payroll - Office	9,453.50	34,225.00	27.6%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%
Payroll - Teachers	195,331.88	581,797.00	33.6%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	2,416.50	19,000.00	12.7%
Payroll - Technolgy Maintenance	50.00	3,000.00	1.7%
Payroll Taxes	17,096.58	59,158.00	28.9%
Phys Ed Uniforms	838.59	1,000.00	83.9%
Repairs and Maintenance	2,243.40	7,400.00	30.3%
Retirement Plan	4,882.51	18,862.00	25.9%
Snow Removal	0.00	3,500.00	0.0%
Teacher Classroom	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.0%

Actual to Budget. YTD October	Total	Budgeted	%
Teacher Development - Y/E	4,523.94	12,000.00	37.7%
Technology Supplies	13,125.00	14,000.00	93.8%
Utilities, Electric	5,133.80	23,000.00	22.3%
Utilities, Gas	650.98	11,000.00	5.9%
Utilities, Internet & Phone	1,443.06	4,000.00	36.1%
Utilities, Trash	694.51	2,100.00	33.1%
Utilities, Water & Sewer	651.47	1,300.00	50.1%
Z. Bus Expenses			
Bus Depreciation Fund Trans	2,916.68	8,750.00	33.3%
Bus Driver Cost Subsidy	390.00	1,000.00	39.0%
Bus Driver Payroll	5,353.00	22,918.00	23.4%
Bus Driver Payroll Taxes	491.30	1,700.00	28.9%
Bus Driver Workers Compensation	499.72	1,000.00	50.0%
Bus Insurance	1,090.75	2,100.00	51.9%
Bus Repair	1,676.65	7,000.00	24.0%
Gas and Oil	3,478.20	12,500.00	27.8%
Transportation Supervisor	625.00	1,250.00	50.0%
Total Z. Bus Expenses	16,521.30	58,218.00	28.4%
Total Expenses	390,644.66	1,226,366.00	31.9%

STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

LESSONS FROM THE GREAT HORNED OWL

Mr. Dan Hanko, 4th Grade

The mouse scurried through the tall grass in the meadow. Changing directions, it darted toward the familiar clump of wild flowers. It ducked under a scraggly bush just as a swiftly moving shadow passed overhead. The Great Horned Owl silently glided past, soared to a nearby tree, and perched once again overlooking the field. It would wait some more for its next meal. Can you picture the scene? What lessons can we learn from this powerful bird of prey?

Several weeks ago the fourth graders and I had opportunity to view the Great Horned Owl and other birds of prey close up at the Outdoor Discovery Center. We learned about the many adaptations given by God to these powerful birds He created on the fifth day of creation. The gifts of silent flying, keen eyesight, excellent hearing, means of camouflage, and sharp beaks and talons all work together to enable the Great Horned Owl to capture food for the day. The owl swoops down



upon its prey, snatches it up, and hastily flies to safety to eat its victim. This great winged creature is the enemy of the voles and mice, small birds, snakes, and even the squirrels and rabbits.

Can you look up and see, through the eyes of the shrew, the enemy we are facing? This enemy can see us with his keen night vision and ability to move his neck 270 degrees to observe our every movement and note our many weaknesses. He listens with his excellent hearing for the slightest noise, waiting to attack when we stumble and make foolish decisions. If only we could better hear our enemy. So silent he is with those large, rounded wings which glide so effortlessly. The soft wing feathers and fringe-like feathers on the tips, muffling the sound, make the enemy so sneaky as he approaches his prey. Once we realize the darkness that overshadows us, can we escape the sharp talons that attempt to snatch us up and away and the hooked beak to puncture our organs and eyes to finish us off?

Is this not the way our real enemy, the devil, works? He watches and quietly waits. We let our guard down and are careless. We covet and enjoy the things of the earth, taking no thought for things which are above. He swoops down with barely a sound and attempts to snatch us away. Our enemy is powerful, sneaky, and quiet as he tries to grab hold of us and carry us far away from God's Word and our church home.

How does the prey escape the danger? A shrew or mouse does not stand exposed in an open field. It will be an easy target for the owl if it does. Is this not a lesson for us? We stand exposed when we do not know the Scriptures, our Confessions, and our Creeds. We must know our enemy, be watchful, and be prepared to seek shelter under the Word. 1 Peter 5:8 says "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." God is our rock and refuge, our shelter and defense. Small birds escape the clutches of their predator by a technique known as "mobbing". Many birds join together to harass and trouble the owl, so that the owl leaves to find a new hunting area. God joins us together as saints to hear the truth proclaimed, meet to discuss worldliness and sin, and talk about the evils and temptations of the world. This makes us aware of the enemy we face each day in our own field. Another strategy of defense against the owl made by the birds is the warning calls. The ceaseless chatter and sharp chirps warn of a nearby predator. These alert other birds to take cover and be on the lookout. We should do this with our enemy also. We must warn our young people and children of the dangers we face and explain the strength of our enemy. We must hear warnings of heresy that could creep into the church and wicked philosophies of the world. We must not think our enemy is weak or not watching our every move.

We look to the Almighty One for strength and protection against our enemies. He alone will protect his creatures and care for their every need. Pray to the Lord and flee to Him. Pray the words of Psalm 124: "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

When We Went to Colorado

Ainsley Huizinga

Have you ever been to Colorado? I went there before. I went with my family. It took us almost a whole day to pack. We had to make sure to bring every single thing we needed. Although we made sure we had everything, we still forgot some stuff.

First, we had to get there. We drove in our car. It was not a nice trip on the way. Eloise was screaming all night. At 1:00 we got to a hotel and slept. After we ate breakfast there, we continued driving and got to our cousins in the afternoon.

When we got there, we played for a little bit, ate dinner, and went to bed. When we woke up we ate breakfast and went to church. In the afternoon we had coffee at our other cousin's house. We went to church for the night service, and then went to bed.

On Monday we went on a hike at Devil's Backbone. My cousin Emery and I brought our cameras. We have the same kind! We heard coyotes howling. They were pretty close and loud. I am glad we did not see them.

On Tuesday we left for a YMCA in the Rocky Mountains. We went with our cousins. When we got there, we found our rooms and put our stuff in them. After that we went outside and played on the playground. Then the parents called us in for dinner. After dinner we went to the gym and went roller skating, played basketball, and played pool ball. Then we went to bed.

The next day we went hiking around a lake and saw an old steamer on the way. My brother Cole stabbed himself with his new knife. We also went roller skating again. The next day we went back to our cousins.

Finally, we left the next day to go back home. The trip home was better than the trip there. Again we had to stop at a hotel. At 7:00 in the morning we left the hotel. We drove all afternoon and got home around dinner time.

I loved that trip so much! I hope we go there again. I miss Emery all the time. I wish she lived in Michigan, or I lived in Colorado with her.

When I Got My Kittens

Macy Moelker

Have you ever received a pet? I have. It was during COVID-19, and our family had to stay home because my brother had it. My mom and dad knew I was always bored. Then, one day, I heard something crash, so I followed the sound. The sound that I heard was a box that fell. Then I saw my dad working in a little room.

Next, my mom told all my siblings and me to go into the room. My siblings already knew about it. Secondly, my mom brought a box into the room and told me to open it. After I opened it a tiny bit, I heard meowing! I was so excited! My siblings helped me open the rest and there were two little kittens in the box! They were so cute!

It was hard to think of a name for them. After a little bit I thought of two cute names. They were Cora for COVID-19 and Bella for my best friend that moved away. For the rest of the day I was so happy! It was the best surprise! I had wanted a pet for so long, and now I finally got one!



For most of the day I played with my kittens. We got some new toys and bowls for them. They loved their toys so much, and they tried to pounce on them sometimes. It was so funny! Having kittens for a pet is so much fun because you can cuddle and play with them! Don't you think you would like your own kitten? I think you should get some!

Going to Indiana

Austen Veldman

Have you ever been to Indianapolis, Indiana? I have. This was a really fun trip! We left around 7:00, and we got there around 11:00. It took us about four hours to drive there. We went there in July.

First, we drove there. My brother and I counted how many American flags we saw. We saw around one hundred thirty American flags. After four hours of driving we went to the museum. We got to the museum at around 11:00. We went in the museum. In the museum we saw dinosaur fossils and a giant transformer.

Then we went outside to play lots of sports. One of the many sports we played was basketball. My brother and I beat our dad 20 – 16. Another sport we played was tennis. I played my brother and he won 15 – 13. We also played football. I kicked a field goal, and it hit the crossbar. My dad threw to us, and we had to dive and catch it. Another sport we played was soccer. We dribbled around obstacles and tried to get to the end, and we shot around. We also played hockey. All we did in hockey was shoot around. We also played baseball. I hit a home run over the fence. Then we played mini-golf. My brother, my dad, and I played for fun. Finally, we went to our hotel. At the hotel we played a basketball game. The backboard was cracked on one of the hoops.

The next morning for breakfast I had three mini pancakes, one muffin, and apple juice. Then we went to the zoo. At the zoo we saw rhinos, zebras, monkeys, seals, ostriches, elephants, giraffes, cheetahs, and many more animals. We also went to a dolphin show. We went on a roller coaster. It was really fun! Later that day we drive around. While we were driving, we saw the Indianapolis Speedway and the Colts Stadium. We also went to the Dollar Tree and got five airheads.

I had so much fun in Indiana! I hope we can go there again!

My Goodbye Party

Kennedy Guichelaar

Have you ever felt happy and sad at the same time? That's how I felt this past summer. We were going to move from Wisconsin to Michigan. I was really sad to leave my old friends but happy to make new ones. I was going to miss my friends so much, but it was fun getting together for the last time at my friend Brielle's house.

First, we swam in their pond. We had contests of who could jump the farthest and the highest, who could make the biggest splash, and things like that. After a while, as the water started to get colder, I splashed out of the pond. Shivering I grabbed my pink tie dye towel and wrapped myself in it. The other girls came out of the pond too.

Then, we had treats. I stared at the pink and blue frosting cupcakes, the ice cream, the cookies, and the bars. It was so hard to choose! I picked the treats that I wanted and then climbed up into the tree to eat with my friends. As it got darker we started a game of ghost-in-the-graveyard. Brielle's brothers kept scaring us. It was so creepy!

Finally, we sat around the fire. The other girls had left, so it was just Brielle and me. We talked about our favorite books call *The Warriors*. Playing at my friend's house was so fun! I hope that someday I will meet my old friends again.

Wisconsin Fun

Kelsey Minderhoud

Have you ever been to a water park? I have. I could not wait to go when my Mom told me we were going. I almost screamed, but I just smiled. I had never gone to a water park before. My sisters Emma, Lindsay, Lydia, and Sonya went as well as my mom and dad.

First, we traveled to Wisconsin. We rented a camper. There was a trampoline and a bounce house right by the camper. When we got hot, we would swim. One time we mini-golfed, and then we swam. But the best part of the trip was still to come.

The best part of the trip was a water park. I was so happy! One of the things I liked there was the pools. In one of the pools there was a big wave. It would come every five seconds. It would thrash you down unless you were old enough to hold yourself up. Suddenly it would come really high. It was fun but also scary.

After we went in the pools, we went on a roller coaster. I had never gone on a roller coaster. So this was exciting! Even though the line was long, I did not care. Finally, we got on the roller coaster. You would go so fast, and before you knew it, you would suddenly come to a stop. Once again – fun but scary! Later we went to our camper. We were all so tired from all this fun! We all went to bed early. We all slept well that night and slept in. I had so much fun! That was a fun experience.



At last it was time to go home. We all wanted to stay there because we had so much fun. But we all knew it was time to go home. I want to go there again before it is too late. I have not gone there in about one or two years. I hope you can go there too. I had an awesome time with my family!

My Best Birthday

Jayden Koole

Have you ever had a birthday better than all the rest? I have. That special birthday was my tenth birthday. When I got home from school that day, there were balloons everywhere. I gave my mom a hug and went inside and watched TV.

After a while my dad came home from work, and Mom said we should go out for supper. So we got ready and went to Uccello's. Once we got there, Mom paid. Then we found a table and sat down.

Next, they came to our table, and Mom ordered the food and drinks. Once we got our food, Mom told them it was my birthday. They came back after a while and gave us a huge dessert.

Last, we went to a splash pad and ate cake. We played for a while. Then we went home. When we got home, Mom and Dad said we had to go to bed right away. It was the best birthday ever!

THE IMPERIAL CROWN

Mr. Brian Dykstra, 5th Grade

In 2019 my wife took me on a trip to Great Britain. We began our trip in London. Our first stop was the Tower of London where the Crown Jewels are on public display in the Jewel House. The Jewel House must be one of the most secure places on the planet. When we entered the Jewel House, we stood on a moving "sidewalk" which took us slowly around the display case. I had not yet come to appreciate British history, so, unfortunately, I did not comprehend what I saw, but I recall being impressed by the beauty of the gold and gem stones. It was difficult to imagine what it would cost to replace all these items. The greatest item on display there was the Imperial State Crown.

That night I adopted the practice of asking my wife where we were going the next day. After dinner I would get online and read as much as I could about our next destination. I hadn't had time to do my homework before the trip, so I would have to make do with an on-site, self-directed crash course. I found the studies enjoyable.

Earlier this year I was sharing some British history with the 5th graders who are not in band. As we were going through a news article about the British Royal Family, a notification popped up to inform us that Queen Elizabeth II just passed away. Current events had never been so current. A few days later, during Her Majesty's funeral procession, the Imperial State Crown rested upon her coffin. A report of the crown read, "It can be quite hard to look at sometimes because of the sheer light that comes off them (the gem stones). It's literally dazzling . . . visually overpowering."

The crown is adorned with 2,868 diamonds (about the size of gems found on a typical engagement ring), 17 sapphires, 11 emeralds and 269 pearls. I recall how I had to save in order to buy my wife an engagement ring with a diamond of 1/3 carat. This crown has 2,868 such diamonds. Quite astounding!

There are three very large gemstones on the crown as well. One, a diamond, is known as the Cullinan II, or the Second Star of Africa. To the men who recall paying for their wives' engagement rings, pay attention to this. This diamond was cut from the largest diamond ever discovered which weighed 3,025 carats. Nine large stones were cut from it. The stone produced another 97 smaller stones. While we commoners scrimp to buy diamonds of one-quarter to one-half a carat, the largest diamond cut from the stone, which now marks the front of the crown, weighs in at an astronomical 317.4 carats, or 1,058 times the size of my wife's! Cutting and polishing these stones took three men eight months to complete.

British kings and queens collected the gems now glittering upon the crown over the last thousand years. The oldest gem in the royal collection now sits atop the crown. It is St. Edward the Confessor's sapphire. The gem originally was set in a ring King Edward wore back in the 11th century. Queen Elizabeth I, King Henry VIII's daughter, procured some of the pearls now on the crown. The stones and pearls tell fascinating stories, some real, some fiction.

Queen Elizabeth II wore the Imperial Crown during the ceremony which opened the yearly session of Parliament. The silver, gold and jewels weigh nearly two and one-half pounds. When the Queen was in her early nineties, she reported the crown could be difficult to wear as she had to read her speech while holding her papers high enough so as not to cause the crown to slip from her head. She said, "You can't look down to read the speech, you have to take

the speech up. Because if you did your neck would break.” Heavy is the head which wears the crown.

What’s the point of all this? Consider that the Imperial State Crown, viewed as an expression of wealth and status, and signifying majesty and sovereignty, is pale in comparison to The Crown of Righteousness which adorns the King of kings. Christ’s crown does not dazzle with diamonds, but with perfect righteousness. Just as the beauty of Solomon’s temple could not contain God’s glory, the greatest gem-cutter working for months could not capture the glory of God’s perfection in earthly diamonds.

God will give to each of His saints a crown of righteousness. Our crowns were purchased with Christ’s blood. We who had listened to Satan and surrendered our original righteous condition, soiling our souls, will be purged with the Lamb’s blood. This new crown will never be lost.

England’s Imperial Crown is backed with great wealth. What monetary value could be placed on it? However, when my wife and I walked the streets of London, impressive as those streets were, I saw the streets were paved with blacktop. How glorious and valuable must the Crown of Righteousness be when the King Who owns it possesses wealth enough to pave the streets of His Kingdom with gold?



5th Grade Student Writing

Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

Elizabeth DeBoer

I Kings 17:8-24 is about Elijah and the widow of Zarephath during a famine. Elijah started living by the brook Cherith where he was fed by ravens. The brook then dried up and he went to the widow's house next. When he asked for food she said that she only had a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse. She was going to use two sticks to cook the last cake for her son and herself. Elijah said that God would provide enough food for them to last until the famine was over. One day the widow's son got sick and died. Elijah prayed three times to God and God raised him from the dead and healed him. The widow didn't know if she could trust Elijah at first, but now she knows that he is a true prophet. Also we see that Elijah trusts in God to provide food for him. We must trust in God when we are going through hard times.

God Proves His Glory at Carmel

Charlotte Meulenberg

My story is when Elijah told Ahab that there would be no rain until he said. When Ahab and Jezebel heard, they tried to find Elijah to force him to command the rain. Elijah was hiding at a widow’s house then God finally told Elijah to go to Ahab and tell him there would be rain. God came to Elijah and told him to gather the people at Carmel. That is what he did. When the people were at Carmel, the contest began. Elijah let the priests of Baal go first; the priests tried for most of the day doing this. The priests even cut themselves and jumped on the altar to see if their god would answer. Their god did not burn the sacrifice. Finally, it was Elijah’s turn to pray to God. He dumped three containers of water on his sacrifice. Then he prayed to

God, and God slurped up his offering. Nothing was left. But still Ahab and Jezebel did not believe. The only concern was that 450 prophets were dead. The lesson was that some people's hearts are so hard even a mighty wonder wouldn't change their hearts.

The Big Famine

Triston Koole

There was a prophet named Elijah. Ahab had married Jezebel at this time. Ahab was a very wicked king, because of this, God sent a famine. Elijah had to say when it was going to rain.

Ahab's loyal servant, Obadiah, was God-fearing. Jezebel was trying to kill the God-fearing prophets, so Obadiah hid 100 prophets and fed them. Obadiah knew he would die if he was caught.

Israel was falling into sin. To decide which God was greater, a contest to bring down fire was held between 450 Baal prophets and Elijah. The 450 prophets shed their blood to get Baal's attention. Then the altar was soaked with water. Elijah said a sentence and the altar was consumed in fire. This shows that God is greater than Baal.

The Contest on Mount Carmel

Nolan Moelker

The second part of 1 Kings 18 takes place on Mount Carmel, in Israel. Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal held a contest to see who is the true God. The prophets of Baal started in the morning and went almost all day, shedding their blood and even getting onto the altar so when the 'god' sent fire, which would never happen, they would sacrifice themselves. When Elijah went to his altar, which was covered with water, Elijah did a simple prayer and immediately God sent fire down from heaven, burning everything.

We should learn from this story that there is no other true God besides our God, and that we should only serve Him and no false god.

Solomon's Wisdom

Quinton Huizinga

In 1 Kings 3, Solomon shows his wisdom. During the night a mom rolled over her baby. She switched babies with another mom. The other mom in the morning recognized that her baby had been switched. They both argued about whose baby it was. They both went to Solomon. Solomon knew what to do. He told both mothers he would cut the baby in half. The real mom did not want this to happen so she said the other mom could have it. Solomon knew whose baby it was now. Solomon had great wisdom.

Israel's Famine and a Gentile's Faith

Jamon Hanko

Baal is the sun god. God is going to punish Israel with a famine because they were worshiping Baal. Elijah goes to a brook called Cherith and God sends him ravens who give him food and he drinks water from the brook. After a while the brook dries up. God tells Elijah to go to a widow's house in Zidon. Zidon is Jezebel's home town.

When he gets to the widow's home, she was not sure if she should feed him because she only had enough flour and oil (for her and her son) for one more day. Elijah told her it would fill back up a little every day. She then gave Elijah food and drink. The next day it filled a little back up. Elijah was teaching her the truth while he was at her house. Then her son died and she thought

he died because of her earlier sins and she was getting punished. Then Elijah raised her son back to life. She had become a true believer.

The lesson is that God does not only save Jews, He also saves Gentiles.

CREATING GOOD STUDY HABITS

Mrs. Rebecca Lubbers, Discovery Center

“What are your children’s study habits at home?” Is that a question you got asked by your children’s teachers at Parent Teacher conferences in October? When you tell your children to study for their test, what do they do? Do they read their notes, fill out the review sheet, make flashcards, or use Quizlet? Do they protest and say they already know it all and don’t need to study? Have you seen their test grades? How effective are their study habits?

These questions are meant to cause you to pause and reflect on your children’s study habits and whether they are working for them. As your children go up a grade each year and the intensity of their workload increases, effective study habits are going to be even more important. It is a very good idea to start implementing effective study habits with your children when they are young. At school, some study strategies get taught, modeled, or explained to the students, and they may even get practiced in the classroom. However, teachers are not at home with their students every night reminding them to study and use the good methods they have been taught. This is where the responsibility of older students and the assistance of the parents of young children is necessary.

Not every student has the same skills and abilities. Some are more talented in academics than others. However, it is the calling of all students to be diligent in their studies, work hard, and do their tasks to the best of their abilities. II Timothy 2:15 is a verse of Scripture that students at our Christian schools memorize in the elementary grades and are frequently reminded of: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Students might be tempted to think that studying is not fun, but Scripture tells us that it is important and can be God-glorifying when done properly. Colossians 3:17 is another passage that we teach our students to encourage them to work diligently in all aspects of schooling, even studying: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

The following are some good studying strategies for students.

1. **Review every night: Don’t save all your studying for the night before the big test.** Even just setting aside 5-10 minutes a night to review what was learned that day in each subject can help students retain what they learned in class.
2. **Make flashcards.** Whether they are written or typed out, flashcards are a great way to study and learn terms, definitions, and lists. As students go through the pile of flashcards, place ones that they know in one pile and put the ones they got wrong in a different pile. Once they are through their original stack, they should pick up the stack they got wrong and go through those again until they answer all of them correctly.
3. **Review Sheet.** If a teacher provides a review sheet for a test, students should focus on learning all the material on that. If it was important enough to make it onto the review sheet, it very likely might be on the test too.
4. **Online Resources.** There are many online resources available that can provide beneficial review of information that students might enjoy.

- a. **Quizlet** is used by junior high students every day. Quizlet allows you to study terms and definitions with different tests, games, and quizzes. Some teachers create sets for their students to study, but you can also create your own sets on a free account.
 - b. **Kahoot** is a fun high-speed, multiple-choice review game. This one can be used to review with a whole class or just with a couple students.
 - c. Math games are a great way to practice addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. There are many websites that have a variety of free games. Ask your student's teachers if they have some specific websites that they would recommend.
5. **Read through class notes and quiz yourself.** When students read through their notes to study for a quiz or test, they should be thinking about what they are reading. With the terms, main ideas, and lists, students should read them over a couple of times and then try to cover them up and repeat them without looking.
6. **Parents quiz your students.**
- a. You can ask them questions from their review sheet, flashcards, or straight out of their notes. This is a great way to mix things up rather than the students studying on their own the whole time.
 - b. With several students in one house, it can be harder for parents to sit with older students and study with them, especially if there are younger children who need more assistance. You can quiz them in quick conversation on the drive home or around the supper table by asking them what they learned in science, history, or Bible that day.
7. **Spelling.** Spelling can be a struggle for some students. Here are just a few suggestions to help with studying.
- a. Make rewriting spelling words every night a little more fun by using different colored pens or by writing with the non-dominant hand.
 - b. Focus on the words that they are getting wrong rather than going over the whole list every night.
 - c. Make fun little connections or sayings to help them remember how to spell a word- "Friends are friends until the end."

LEARNING STYLES

Mrs. Jill Reitsma, Discovery Center

I recently gave a teacher sectional at the October PRTI Teacher Convention. The sectional was titled, "Utilizing the Different Learning Styles to Engage Students in the Classroom". Here is a summary of this topic for all who may be interested.

Learning styles refer to individual differences in cognitive functioning and academic skills. Your learning style impacts the way you remember information. Think of our working memory, sometimes called short-term memory, which refers to the processes that allow us to hold on to and manipulate information we are currently aware of and working on. This is important for everyday reasoning and decision making.

Understanding learning styles can make it easier to create, accommodate, and develop more efficient materials for teaching. It can also encourage students' participation and

motivate their learning. The teacher can then present the lesson in various ways. This **CAN** also add to the motivating factors of the students' performance in the classroom. We know a healthy balance is key. We also need to model sitting still and listening for a period of time for all students. Some people may need more than one of these styles to learn best.

1. Visual Style of Learning – A person who learns by looking at things such as the board, a book, a picture or a video.

- Needs pictures
- Takes time to answer questions (thinking time)
- Likes color
- Looks away (but not daydreaming) picturing in their head
- Needs time reminders to stay on task

Examples to help incorporate visuals: poems, songs, lists, maps, humorous things to help remember, diagrams, or flowcharts.

2. Auditory Style of Learning – A person who learns by listening.

- Talks aloud when writing or reading
- Information set to music
- Distracted by background noise
- Poor comprehension when reading silently
- Difficult following written directions

Examples to help incorporate auditory: discussions, group or partner work, choral reading, presentations, computer work or oral summaries.

3. Kinesthetic Style of Learning - A person who learns by moving things or building a model of something or just by touching with their hands.

- Enjoys giving presentations
- Likes to teach others
- Good eye-hand coordination
- Draws out things
- Good at integrating parts into a whole
- Energetic

Examples to help incorporate kinesthetic: Explain the "how" of things, 3-dimensional pictures, building a model, touch or taste.

4. Read/Write Style of Learning – A person who learns primarily by reading and writing.

- Rewrites notes
- Rereads materials (handouts and textbooks)
- Writes down thoughts about what is being taught
- Uses dictionaries or other reference material

Examples to help the read/write learner: have them rewrite information in their own words, translate charts, diagrams and graphs into words, give the main concepts and ideas, have them study alone in a quiet area.

There is a fun learning style questionnaire you can take if you're interested in knowing what way or ways you learn best. Just google: Learning Style Questionnaire Michigan and pick the Michigan.gov link. It comes in a pdf and with an evaluation summary.

Special Events Calendar

Thursday, December 15	Band/Choir Concert – 7PM
Thursday, December 22	Christmas Assembly – 1:15PM
Friday, January 27	Fearfully & Wonderfully Made Day
Friday, March 3	Friends & Family Night
Thurs.-Sat., April 21-22	HeArt Prize
Saturday, May 20	25 th Annual Hope Classic Races

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